

GoodFood

Spring collections

MIDDLE EAST

Celebrate the season with picnic-perfect recipes, bbq burgers and magical mini-breaks

Giving up gluten

Breads, cakes – you don't have to miss a thing!

THAI THESE OUT!

A tasty way to bring in the Thai new year

INSIDE

- * Child-friendly cooking
- * Learn to make a terrine
- * Meet Rachel Allen



HEALTHY LENTILS



FRENCH TRADITIONS

WIN! Cooking classes, dinner vouchers and hotel stays





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Welcome!



higher levels of gluten, than was naturally intended.

I decided to go gluten-free about two years ago, after a kinesiology test with the experts from Viva Mayr clinic diagnosed me as being gluten-intolerant. It wasn't easy at first. I love bread, and cakes, and pasta... but over time, I managed to wrap my head around it. Now, it's just a way of life for me – I buy gluten-free pasta, I eat more rice or other non-gluten starches, I ignore the bread on the table when eating out (most of the time!), and the difference in how I feel is incredible.

What I'm really excited about is the increasing amount of variety we are now getting here, when it comes to gluten-free foods – whether it's supermarkets stocking more products, or new bakeries and specialty stores opening up in town. If you are already making gluten-free choices, or want to explore the option – everyone can benefit from reducing gluten in their diets – try out the delicious bread and cake recipes in *No gluten? No problem* on p54 – it will open up a whole new world for you!

This month, when I'm not baking, you'll find me outdoors. This is one of my favourite times of year in the UAE – it's still pleasant enough for alfresco eating, social calendars are packed with events, and peak summer feels bearably far enough away. Yes, it may not be spring as we know it, but it's our version of spring.

We've got springtime cooking and eating covered in this issue, with the perfect picnic menu (*Let's eat outdoors*, p50), and creative burger recipes for your next bbq (*Build a burger*, p36). If you're looking for a short pre-summer getaway, we've got that covered too – check out our reviews on three weekend break options, where a beautiful beach and fab food is a given, in *Spring breaks*, p80.

Until next month,

Sudeshna

Cutting out gluten seems to be becoming something of a trend here at the moment – probably because of growing awareness. It is amazing how many people can go through their entire lives being gluten-intolerant, and not knowing about it. While it isn't scientifically established yet, in the last few hundred years or so, changing lifestyles and agricultural practices have led to people consuming

Editor's picks

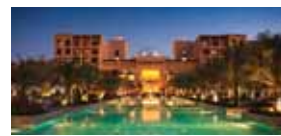
♦ I love Jamie's practical, fun approach to food, and will definitely be adding this to my bookshelf. p15



♦ My 4pm sugar fix craving will NOT be a problem



with this decadent cake on hand! p54



♦ Hilton Ras al Khaimah offers the ultimate culinary getaway with its authentic Brazilian churrascaria at Pura Vida restaurant, p80.

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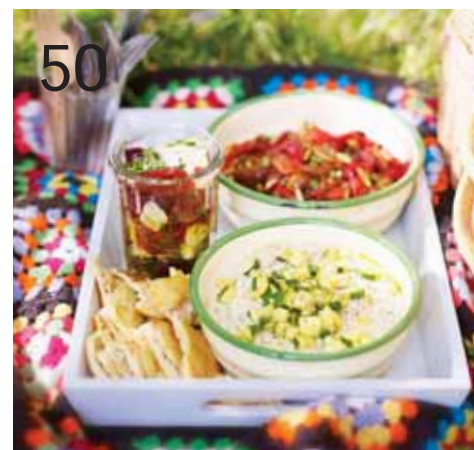
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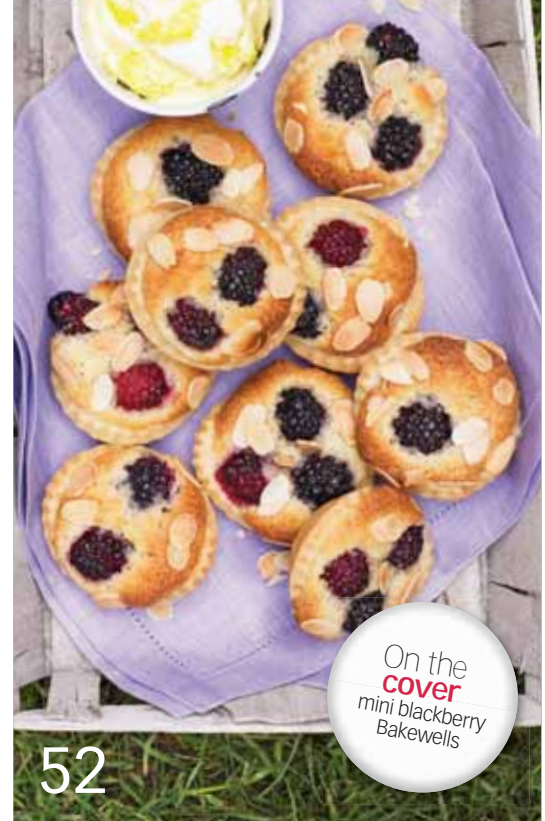
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On the
cover
mini blackberry
Bakewells

52

Our recipe descriptions

V Suitable for vegetarians

☞ You can freeze it

❄ Not suitable for freezing

Easy Simple recipes even beginners can make

A little effort These require a bit more skill and confidence – such as making pastry

More of a challenge Recipes aimed at experienced cooks

Low fat 12g or less per portion

Low cal 500 calories or less per main.

Superhealthy Low in saturated fat, 5g or less per portion; low in salt, 1.5g or less; and at least one of the following: provides one-third or more of your daily requirement of fibre, iron, calcium, folic acid and/or vitamin C, or counts at least one portion of your recommended 5-a-day fruit and veg.

Good for you Low in saturated fat, low in salt.

Heart healthy Low in saturated fat, with 5g or less, and low in salt, with 1.5g or less, and high in omega-3 fatty acids

1 of 5-a-day The number of portions of fruit and/or veg contained in a serving

Vit C **Iron** **Omega-3** **Calcium** **Folate** **Fibre**

Indicating recipes that are good sources of useful nutrients

Some recipes contain pork & alcohol. These are clearly marked and are for non-Muslims only. Look for these symbols:

P contains pork

A contains alcohol

Your say

We love to hear from you!

AN ECO FRIENDLY POEM

While global warming is a recognised problem worldwide, it's no longer just an inconvenient truth, it's time to spread awareness, before fresh water reserves are declared moot. When it comes to vegetables and fruit, we need to open our eyes, as genetically modified options, are taking the world by surprise. It's not something we can ignore, it's no longer ignorable opprobrious, we need to investigate, research and be aware, we have to start being more knowledgeable and cautious.

An opportune time to start the movement, a magnificent spring into the month of March, it's time we homo sapiens got conscious, before the droughts dehydrate the planet to a parch. 'Tis time to encourage the organic farmer, so to the whole food market we should head. If we don't join the league that eats healthy, it won't be long before the eco-system will be declared dead. *BBC Good Food ME* has led the charge, it's never too late to wake up to reality, with the March issue dedicated to the cause.

Lianne Falk



NEW EXPERIENCES

I was so happy to receive a big bumper issue this month! There were quite a few interesting reads, but I really enjoyed reading up about Gourmet Abu Dhabi (*A taste of things to come*, March 2013) as I couldn't make it to this year's event – will block my diary for next year!

TALK TO US!

Email us on feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com with your thoughts, views and comments.

You can also connect with us on social media! Find us on:



Or, you could write to us at:
The Editor
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Win!

The writer of the Star Letter wins a **Dhs1,000 voucher from @home**, South Africa's leading homeware store. @home offers a glamorous and fashionable range of products for the entire home, including the bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, dining, and living room, as well as general home décor items, appliances and office accessories. Their contemporary, fresh, and innovative products are both practical and aesthetically designed. @home stores are located in Dubai at Mercato Mall, Ibn Battuta Mall, Dubai Marina Mall, The Dubai Mall and Mall of the Emirates; in Abu Dhabi at Al Wahda mall; and at Al Hamra Mall in Ras Al Khaimah.



@home
THE HOMEWARE STORE

Star Letter

GREEN GOODNESS

I picked up this month's issue, and loved each and every feature in the Gourmet Lifestyle section. I recently moved homes and have a large backyard, which at the moment has nothing but an outdoor garden table and my kids' toys. I always buy fresh fruit and vegetables from the local markets and supermarkets, which is why I was really inspired when I read your feature on growing your own herb and vegetable garden (*Grow*

your own green patch, March 2013). It's a great idea and never crossed my mind before, perhaps because I did not really know where to start. I've now sowed my seeds, and water and care for my plants religiously – can't wait for this year's harvest.

Zara D'mello



I always try at least a few different recipes from each issue and this month I tried the Roasted carrots with goat's cheese and pomegranate (*Seasonal stars*, March 2013). I don't usually bake, but decided to also try the Carrot and cream cheese cupcakes (*Bake your Mum a treat*) for my mother, who loved how moist and fresh the cream cheese tasted.

Judith Villar



FAN MAIL

I never usually write in, but being a huge fan of Masterchef Australia's judge George Calombaris ("*Gary, Matt and I are more influential than the Prime Minister!*" March 2013), I just had to! I enjoyed reading his interview and knowing more about him, and even attempted to cook his dish for my wife, who was really impressed with how unique and innovative it was.

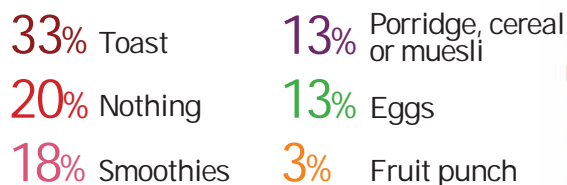
Roger Rodriguez



We asked you...

Facebook poll

What do you usually eat for breakfast?



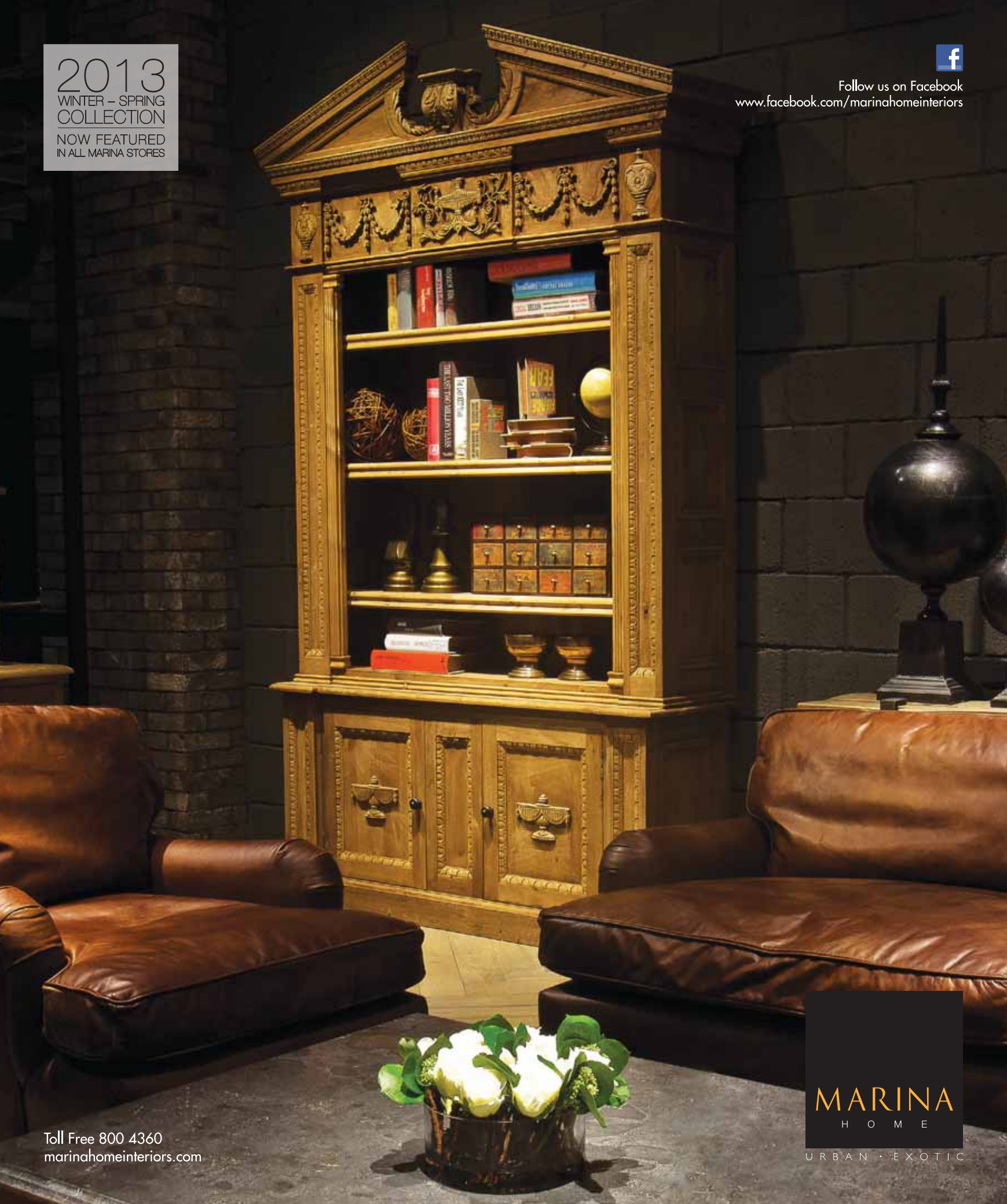
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Foodie file

What's hot and happening in the culinary world, here and around the globe.



Bookmunch café

DINE IN THE CITY

✴ It's all happening at Wasl Square these days, it seems! Literary buffs will find their inner zen at the creative café Book Munch. The newly opened café at the bustling Al Wasl Square, boasts a large selection of English and Arabic books – available for purchase or simply to read while there – and scrumptious sweet treats including the carrot and courgette cake. Check out the Mad Hatter's table that is laden with pastries, cookies and bread – a treat for eyes and tummies! Visit bookmunchcafe.com.

✴ Joining the list of new neighbourhood cafés at Wasl square is the Pantry café. Housed in an industrial warehouse-style space, the homely café exudes a New York vibe with an open kitchen, live pizzeria and beverage bar. We love their homemade breakfast items including fresh skillet and scotch eggs! Gourmet products such as jams, oils, and cheese are available for sale too. Call 04-3883868.

✴ Salamar Lounge, at the Habtoor Grand Beach Resort and Spa, is the latest Latin-themed outdoor hotspot to see and be seen at! Enjoy a night out with friends, after work, and try the mojitos, Cuba libres and light bites including pineapple chicken salad, while dancing the night away to Latin beats. Call 04-4084257.



Juice it up!

In need of a detox? The newly launched 100 per cent natural, fresh, raw and organic juice brand Essentially will help you get back on the health track, with their effective detox and supplementation programmes. Replace your cup of coffee and meals with juices for one, three or five days to give your body a thorough cleanse. From Dhs199 per day for the supplement package and Dhs299 per day for the cleanse programmes. For more information, visit essentially.ae.

Capital plans

Award-winning hotspot Zuma, will be opening its doors at Sowwah square, Al Maryah island in Abu Dhabi, later this year. Watch this space for more information!



Veggie goodness

Think a healthy vegetable-loaded diet is bland and boring? Think again! Diet delivery company Health Factory has launched its vegetarian menu which includes appetising gourmet Indian and Oriental dishes that are purely vegetarian, and low in sodium.

Package prices start from Dhs2,950 per month. Call 04-3473808.

This just in:

The all-new Philips Jamie Oliver HomeCooker is the ultimate multi-functional device that allows you to chop, steam, stir and sauté in one single gadget. It's something of a kitchen magician! Dhs1,445 at all leading hypermarkets.



DISCOUNTS ON THE GO!

Feel like the coupon queen every time you take out your discount vouchers at a restaurant? Forget about cramming all your vouchers into a wallet, and download the TwoForOneGo mobile app, where you and your partner can enjoy offers – two for the price of one – at fine-dining restaurants, cafés and spas. Simply skim through an extensive list of offers and present your digital voucher on arrival. Visit twoforonego.com for more information.

DOWN TO THE BONE

A recent survey conducted by Milk powder brand Anlene shows that women between the age of 41-50 are compromising their bone health, as they are putting the needs of their family before themselves. Anlene ambassador and expert, Dr Humeira Badsha, recommends 20 minutes of daily sun exposure to increase Vitamin D intake and prevent osteoporosis. A good diet full of calcium and vitamin-rich foods such as vegetables, beans, yoghurt, salmon and orange juice, and physical activity is also recommended for healthy bones, and mothers can get this by playing with their kids or simply going for a walk.



Couture cookies

Boutique bakery Maison Sucre has teamed up with Eleni's New York to bring their range of custom, hand-painted, gourmet peanut- and tree-nut free cookies, all the way from its landmark shop at the iconic Chelsea Market, to Dubai. We hear Katie Holmes and Lady Gaga are fans of their gorgeously crunchy cookies – if it's good enough for them, it's good enough for us! Call 02-6396622.



It's difficult to think anything but pleasant thoughts while eating a home-grown tomato.

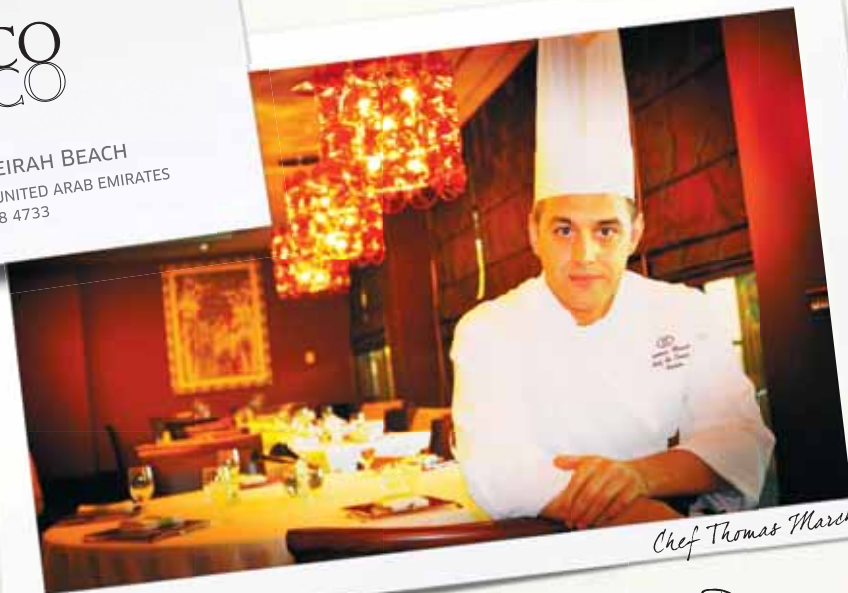
- Lewis Grizzard, American writer

NOT SO RUN-OF-THE-MILL!

An urban farm and research centre is set to open this July in a disused mill in Salford, Manchester, to become the first biospheric city. Vincent Wallsh, director of the The Biospheric Foundation has teamed up with Manchester International Festival – an annual culture and art festival – to create a project that educates communities on sustainable food production. The old three-storey mill has been turned into an agricultural space, and school children and families can visit to check out the outdoor forest of fruit trees, plants and cultivation of fish and plant-life, using a special technology system known as aquaponics.

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Aisle file

Gorgeous gourmet buys, kitchen gear, foodie accessories, home décor and more.



This retro Two's Company lemonade dispenser is evocative of summer school holidays – perfect as the weather starts warming up. Dhs945, at **SAUCE GIFTS**.



Cheese-lovers will enjoy grating parmesan over freshly baked pasta, with this stylish Tavolo cheese grater. It looks attractive on a kitchen counter and dinner table too! Dhs249, at **THE ONE**.



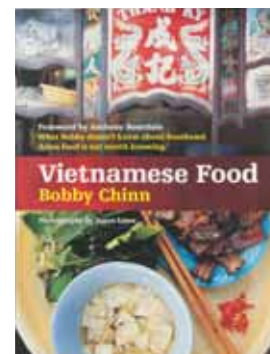
Looking for the ultimate baking equipment? This five-piece enamelware Falcon bake set includes three bake pans, in various sizes, as well as two pie dishes. Time to get baking! Dhs540, at **COMPTOIR 201**.



Making crêpes just got easier with this colourful Ceramica crêpe pan, which is designed to help slide them out on to plates smoothly. Fill the paper-thin French delicacies with chocolate spread, chopped strawberries and a drizzle of fresh cream, for an indulgent Friday breakfast. Dhs155, at **LAKELAND**.



Bring out this six-piece Chocolate fondue set, the next time you invite friends over, and serve fresh fruits such as pineapples, strawberries and melon cubes, to dip into a pot of hot melted chocolate. Decadent! Dhs39, at **HOME CENTRE**.



Delve into this *Vietnamese Food* cookbook by Bobby Chin (Conran Octopus), brimming with authentic recipes. Dhs104, at **VIRGIN MEGASTORES**.



Planning a movie night? Make some healthy popcorn to snack on – sans the butter, caramel and cheese – with this snazzy Popcorn popper. Dhs198, at **HARVEST HOME**.



Go bananas with Dole's latest gadget, the Yonanas ice cream maker! Simply peel fruit, freeze for a day, and insert it into the chute to make a delicious and nutritious homemade frozen dessert. Dhs269, at **CITRUSSTV.COM**.



Your little one will love carrying this colourful Peter rabbit mini tin to school. Dhs8, at **ZAZEEZOU**.



Here to help

Our expert chef Andy Campbell offers practical advice to tackle all your cooking dilemmas.

Q Why is a clay pot used in cooking? Could you please give me a few tips on how to use one, and what dishes are recommended to cook in it?

A. Clay pot cooking is used everywhere, from Southeast Asia to North Africa and Europe, because it is cheaper than metal. An unglazed pot is often called a Dutch Oven while a glazed pot is a tagine from North Africa. The former needs to be soaked in cold water for at least 30 minutes before use. The idea is that a clay pot cooks at slightly lower temperatures than normal roasting. Steam is created in the pot when sealed with a lid, making it ideal for cooking poultry or fish. Cooking in a clay pot results in a succulent steamed roast with virtually no fat. Remember to season your pot before using it for the first time – soak in water for two hours, rub the inside with a clove of garlic, fill halfway with water, cover with a lid and cook empty for two hours. My favourite clay pot recipe? Toss in some well-seasoned poultry, add some sumac for a lemony flavour, add carrots, celery, onions and garlic and cook at about 120C for two hours.

Q I like using fresh herbs, but so many recipes use dried herbs. How much of a fresh herb, such as basil, should I substitute for a dried herb?

A. You will generally use half as much dried herbs than you would fresh and you can always substitute dried for fresh if you prefer them. Hard herbs such as rosemary and thyme are used at the start of the cooking process, while soft herbs such as parsley, basil, coriander, are better to finish your dish off with. Try using the stalks or roots of coriander, mint or parsley, crushed into a paste, with a little oil, when

starting your dish. Only add basil or tarragon when presenting your dish as they can taste a little metallic if added too early.

When cooking with dried herbs, you need to cook with them at the beginning – this gives them time to rehydrate and release their flavours.



Q What is the perfect glaze for beef?

A. Different cuts of beef suit different glazes. Your cooking method of either barbecuing, grilling or roasting will dictate the frequency of basting. Start by using a good brush that you are not likely to lose bristles from. The glaze is generally applied in the later stages of cooking to prevent it from burning. I like mixing a cup of balsamic vinegar, ⅓ cup dark brown sugar, and a couple of tablespoons of Dijon mustard mixed with two cloves of chopped garlic for my beef glaze. Reduce everything to a syrup before basting. You can add some dried chili to give this a little kick. You can also try using palm sugar, honey or maple syrup as an alternative to brown sugar, and lemon juice, lime juice or grape juice instead of vinegar. Ketchup or Worcestershire sauce can also be added into the mix – just experiment and keep basting each time the beef looks dry.

Q Is there an easy way to scale a fish if you don't have a fish scaler?

A. I like to place a newspaper on the kitchen counter or table before scaling fish. Using a tablespoon, scrape the scales off, starting from the tail towards the head. Remove the gills with the scissors and gut the fish. Rinse the fish in a bucket of water and simply throw the newspaper into your composting bin or rubbish disposal.

Q Can coriander leaves be stored in a freezer to maintain its freshness?

A. Yes! The best method is to blanch the leaves in boiling salted water and then refresh them in an ice bath. Squeeze out all the excess water and allow to dry on kitchen paper. Remove from the paper, roughly chop and put in a zip lock bag, removing all the air before sealing shut. You could also freeze the picked herbs in ice cube trays, mixed with either olive oil or melted butter, and use later on, to stir into your pot of softened onions and garlic when making sauces, bolognese, curries or slow-cooked dishes.



Andy's ingredient of the month

I've been using a lot of locally grown butternut squash, which is a good source of Vitamin A, C, E, and is rich in fibre, magnesium, manganese and potassium. Use it in pasta with local ricotta cheese and purées for fish or shellfish.

Ask us & win! Got a cooking question you need answered? Send your culinary query to feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com and be in with a chance to win a dinner voucher for two, worth Dhs350, for the Tuesday night Eat right, live right offer at The Address Dubai Marina, which offers delicious Oriental, Indian and Arabic vegetarian dishes. To find out more about Chef Andy, visit chefandycampbell.com.

*Winner will be chosen on a random basis.

INTERNATIONAL FOOD HALLS AND DINING



Lafayette
GOURMET

GALLERIES LAFAYETTE, THE DUBAI MALL

On test: Toasters

Essential home gadgets reviewed.



Kenwood kMix toaster

We're not sure whether we love the vibrant colour of the toaster more, or its features! With blue, purple, green, orange and yellow colours available in this model, we're guaranteed you'll find a toaster to suit any colour scheme, or add a pop of colour to your

kitchen counter. With features such as a crumb tray at the base of the toaster, a defrost option, toast rack or bun warmer, and cancel function, this toaster makes toasting everything from a slice of bread to a waffle, super easy!

What we liked: The easy-to-assemble toaster rack sits neatly on top of the toaster and keeps toast warm and ready to eat, long after it's done. The bun rack gives you the freedom to toast items such as bagels, which is great, especially for those who enjoy a bagel for breakfast. The browning controls on the toaster allow you to get the crispiness you desire, while the defrost setting works great for more indulgent breakfast treats such as waffles, and even frozen bread. We loved the Peek & View function which lets you check how your toast is coming along without cancelling, so you get the toast exactly as you want it, every time.

What we didn't like: While the vibrant colour is great, the dial text was difficult to read on the browning dial.

To buy: Dhs275, at all leading electronic stores.

User tip

Make full use of the wire storage clips under the toaster as they keep the extra electrical wires tucked away neat and tidy.

Severin AT 2507 toaster

This sleek, small and efficient gadget is ideal for small families. Some of its handy functions include defrost function with LED indicator, bread lift – to make removing the toast easy – automatic switch-off, crumb tray and reheat function, which simply re-heats without browning the toast even further.

What we liked: Its compact size makes it great for a small kitchen, and it can even be stashed away in a cupboard when not in use. The wide bread slots meant we could toast bread slices of any width, and the browning control, which ranges from one to six, allowed us to prepare toast as per individual tastes, from lightly toasted to the very crisp. The crumb tray is great for those who forget to clean their toaster each and every time it is used, as it gathers all the extra crumbs from the toast. Another great feature was the cancel button, which is great if you are in a hurry, and do not want your toast very crispy.

What we didn't like: The toaster did not have a timer, and so that meant at least a few trial and errors before I got the perfect toast.

To buy: Dhs199, available at Galleries Lafayette and leading electronic stores.



User tip

Don't try to loosen crumbs or clean the inside of the toaster with a knife or metallic objects, as you may damage the inner parts.



Bugatti Volo toaster

This seriously stylish product is like the Prada of toasters – a designer take on what is otherwise a mundane household product! With features to match its elegant Milan-designed body, it will glam up any kitchen counter. Packaged with a host of add-ons such as a bun-warmer and a 'sandwich cage', six browning levels, plus defrost, reheat and bagel options, there's not much this toaster can't do when it comes to your breakfast needs.

What we liked: Not your average 'pop-up' toaster, the motorised toast lifting system glides up and down when you insert a slice of bread and when it's ready – smooth and stylish. Controls are through sleek, one-touch buttons with indicator lights, and there is a built-in crumb tray that is seamlessly designed into the body, so you are ensured mess-free usage. With over six level options, you are guaranteed to get your perfect piece of toast each time. The widely proportioned slots and the bagel

option in particular, are ideal for relaxed weekend mornings – we enjoyed experimenting with our favourite breads. What's more, the two sandwich 'cage' attachments – in which you put in a ready-made sandwich that is held together inside the cage – mean you can make not just toasted bread, but full-on toasted sandwiches, so you won't need an extra sandwich toaster for your packed lunches.

What we didn't like: It's quite a big-sized unit for a two-slice toaster, and for the amount of counter space it occupies, it would make sense for it to have a larger capacity. Otherwise, there's not much to fault with this product!

To buy: Prices start from Dhs990, available at Jashanmal stores in Dubai Mall and Mall of the Emirates.

User tip

When using the sandwich cage, always ensure that the bread slices go right down to the bottom so it gets toasted evenly.



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On my bookshelf. . .



★ We ask the pros to tell us about the cookbook

they can't live without.

Chris Lester, Executive Chef at Caprice Holdings

"For me, the best cookbooks are the ones that serve as a great reference point for what is hot right now, as well as providing the spark to create new dishes. The one cookbook that I've gone back to time and time again for inspiration is *British Food* by Mark Hix (Quadrille). What I love about this book is that, just as the name suggests, it's a fantastic celebration of using great ingredients to create classic British dishes."

Watch this:

★ **30 Minute meals with Rachael Ray**
Monday-Thursday,
on Food Network



Who doesn't love Rachael Ray's flamboyant character and infectious enthusiasm for food? Join her as she prepares quick, easy comfort food in just half an hour. Watching her manoeuvre her way around the kitchen, cooking and sharing personal stories, and handy tips, as if she were in her home kitchen, is as entertaining as it will be inspiring for the next day's home-cooked supper.



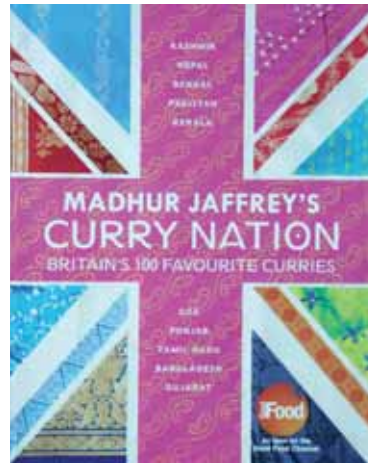
Download this:

★ **Food in a minute, Recipes on the go**
Free for iPhone, iPad
and Android phones

This recipe app is great for creative quick fixes. All recipes include a video, along with the image. You can also add recipes to your playlist and search according to ingredients, such as chicken, or by categories such as desserts. We love the 'Surprise me' button which throws up unusual global recipes – think Chilli bean falafels, and tangy apricot nibbles.

Culina-reads

Reviews of the latest cookbooks, food shows and mobile apps.

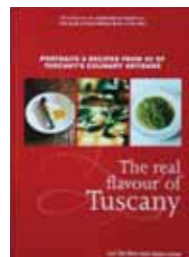


★ **Madhur Jaffrey's Curry Nation: Britain's 100 favourite curries (Ebury Press)**

The colourful cover with sari patterns making up the British flag design probably sum up this book better than any review could – it tells the story, through its recipes, of how Indian food has taken over the English palate, one curry at a time. Madhur Jaffrey, a well-loved actress, cookbook author and TV show host is almost like the Godmother of Indian cuisine, having played an important role in bringing it to the world. In this book, she explores Indian curries as it is cooked and eaten in Britain – making the adapted recipes and ingredients suitable for here too – with each recipe coming from a restaurant or a home cook's kitchen. They are all very do-able, and the stunning photography makes each dish leap out, almost begging to be eaten. Conveniently divided into sections such as appetisers, snacks and soups; rice breads and pancakes; salads and chutneys,

as well as ingredient-led sections including lamb, beef and pork; chicken and eggs; fish; and vegetables, the recipes offer a good insight into the varied flavours of different parts of India, whether it's Bengal, Goa or Kerala – and even goes beyond its borders to venture into the related Nepalese cuisine. A spice mixes section at the back is a great bonus, if you want to learn to make your own.

Dhs122, available at Jashanmal bookstores



The real flavour of Tuscany, by Lori de Mori and Jason Lowe (Quadrille publishing)

What self-respecting foodie doesn't dream of (if they haven't already ticked off their list) a culinary trip to Tuscany,

to revel in the abundance of glorious food amidst the lush, rolling hills? But before you get on that flight, get this book. A collaborative effort between an author and Italy-expert, and a travel photographer, this isn't a cookbook, it is a storybook. It tells the stories of Tuscany's best known – and some not as well known, but equally talented – culinary personalities, from chefs and restaurateurs, to cheese-makers, beekeepers and farmers, in an interview format, offering a rare insight into their worlds. Each person's story is accompanied by evocative, takes-you-there imagery, and recipes. The care lavished on food by these people, the respect for seasonality, and an enduring humility is what ties these people together – and probably what makes Tuscan food truly special.

Dhs116, available at Jashanmal bookstores



Jamie's 15 minute meals (Michael Joseph)

This book probably needs as little introduction as Jamie Oliver does. After the overwhelming success of his 30-minute meal book and TV series, he is taking things a

step further in his quest to help rushed, time-starved homemakers. As he points out right at the outset, don't worry about clock-watching – while in theory, these recipes can all be completed in 15 minutes, it will, in all likelihood, take most of us a bit longer (we know, we tried a few). But, what this book can do is teach you that you can serve up healthy, tasty family suppers (Jamie encourages family-style sharing) in much less time than you'd think. Using flavour inspiration from around the globe – from Morocco to Asia and everywhere in between – the recipes are divided by ingredient, and also into pasta, soups and sarnies, and breakfast. With Jamie's inimitable, friendly style, and strong focus on nutrition, this is a must-have for any busy mum – or dad!

Dhs165, available at Jashanmal bookstores

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Tried & tasted

Each month, we review two of the city's top tables.

Chinese



Where: Hakkasan, Jumeirah Emirates Towers

What's it like: Taking what is essentially a simple and hearty cuisine, and elevating it to a sophisticated lounge experience, is an art perfected by Hakkasan. From the torch-lit stone pathway set over water leading up to the entrance, to the lush greenery surrounding the outdoor terrace area, you get a very Zen-like feeling as you walk in. The stylishly contemporary interiors are cavernous, with three separate sections, each offering a different vibe, with one thing in common – good service, fabulous cocktails, and a buzzing atmosphere, with little things like the music volume being just right, making all the difference to the overall experience.

The menu is varied, and torn for choice, we got greedy and for starters, ordered not only a selection of steamed dim sum – which were little parcels of delight – but also a roasted mango duck with lemon sauce (deliciously crisp on the outside, with thin slivers of fresh mango complementing the meat perfectly) as well as the star of our meal, fried soft shell crab with chilli and curry leaf – bursting with flavour, succulent, and very moreish. For mains, we opted for a Sanpei chicken claypot, in which tender pieces of chicken came dressed in a light sauce with spring onion, sweet basil and dried chilli, and was delicious with fragrant jasmine rice. We couldn't decide if we liked it more than the stir-fry Wagyu beef cheek with Szechuan pepper, but either way, both were polished off.

With very little room left for dessert, we soldiered on nonetheless, and opted to share the selection of homemade sorbets, which had the flavours of fresh fruit coming clearly through, and the chocolate pavé with caramelised banana, which offered a stylish, modern and delicious take on a traditional Asian-style dessert.

Best for:
A lavish evening out with friends

If you want to go: Approximate price for dinner for two is Dhs750, without drinks. Call 04-3848484.

- Sudeshna Ghosh



Where: Long Yin, Le Meridien Dubai

What's it like: There are a real shortage of good Chinese restaurants in Dubai, and thankfully Long Yin is a real gem down in Garhoud. Even though it feels like a long way away for those of us living in New Dubai, once you rid yourself of the mental block, it isn't really that far – and the drive is well worth it for the food here. One of the stable of eateries at Le Meridien, it's fairly full even on a weeknight and the alfresco terrace to the left of the hotel entrance has a real atmosphere, so make use of it while the weather still allows for it. The menu is vast, from a separate dim sum selection, along with soups, starters and salads to mains that include all the Chinese classics such as sweet and sour chicken, beef in oyster sauce and so on.

One thing that's really hard to find is great crispy Peking duck, but Long Yin has one up its sleeve – and they even provide a waiter to chop it up and roll it into spring rolls for you, as you devour them as soon as they hit the table. Beware though, it's so easy to fill up on these before you've even hit the main course. The dim sum comes in a choice of two of four pieces and all the starters are of a fairly large size.

For the mains, one crispy lamb with five spices is enough for two and hits the seasoning just right, with the crispy skin hiding a melt-in-your-mouth morsel of lamb inside, while sides like Szechuan seasonal greens and fried rice with prawns, while delicious, are vast. The rice perhaps needs a little more flavouring, but the greens had a refreshing kick to them.

Best for:
A relaxed, affordable date night

Desserts offer up both Asian and European options from a fruit platter to a crème brûlée, although after the delicious savoury morsels we didn't have anywhere to put dessert so opted out of ordering any. **If you want to go:** Approximate price for dinner for two is Dhs400, without drinks. Call 04-2170000.

- Georgina Wilson-Powell

Flavours of the month

Our pick of the best restaurant offers, promotions and deals this month.

✴ Moroccan flavours

Take in the aromas of authentic Maghrebian cuisine, and indulge in pigeon pastilla (brick pastry stuffed with pigeon, almond and cinnamon and flavoured with ginger, nutmeg cloves and white pepper), the signature dish of the month at Almaz by Momo, in Harvey Nichols. Pair this with the couscous mechour (couscous with slow roasted lamb shoulder, served with vegetable broth) for a delicious Moroccan meal. Available through the month, call 04-4098877.



✴ All fired up

Sample regional delicacies of Thailand this month at Benjarong, Dusit Thani Dubai, which is serving dishes from the north eastern province of Issan, such as sticky rice with fiery chillies, fish sauce and a variety of spicy flavourings. Available until April 30, for lunch and dinner, Dhs40 onwards per dish. Call 04-3174515.



✴ New Year celebrations

Celebrate Songkran, the Thai New Year, by dining at Sukothai, Le Meridien Dubai. Relish delicacies like Phuket lobster filled with coconut red curry, sweet basil and herbs, and wok-fried North-eastern sweet leaf with oyster sauce, as part of the exotic four-course set menu, paired with four selected wines. Available from April 13-15, from Dhs399 per head. Call 04-7022455.

✴ Light bites

If you're craving comfort food, but trying to stay on track with your healthy eating regime, try out the Food for life menu offered at Fountain, Movenpick Hotel and Apartments Bur Dubai. Serving everything from chilli con carne – made with lean beef – and udon noodles with sautéed chicken, the menu offers vitamin and antioxidant-rich dishes to suit your dietary requirements. Every Wednesday night, from Dhs125 per head, call 04-3104320.



No.5 Lounge and Bar, The Ritz-Carlton DIFC

✴ After-hours fun

Head to the newly opened No.5 Lounge and Bar, The Ritz-Carlton DIFC, to try the 3,6,9 tapas menu which includes an assortment of three, six or nine tapas items, including sushi, mini Wagyu beef burgers, and eggplant with ricotta rolls. Daily from 6pm onwards, from Dhs95, call 04-3722222.

✴ Taste of Turkey

Now you can taste Turkish dishes prepared with special spices and traditional cooking methods, straight from the Tike Mediterranean grill and bar in Istanbul, as two guest chefs from the hotel visit The Market café at Grand Hyatt Dubai this month, to cook up a storm. Try mixed grills, spiced meats, salads, Turkish sweets, and Raki, a popular Turkish aperitif. Available from April 11-19, call 04-3172222.

✴ Bottomless ribs

Meat lovers can get a chance to devour some of the finest meats, sauce-basted short ribs and tender lamb ribs at the All-you-can-eat ribs night, on Wednesdays at Blue Flame, Jumeirah Creekside Hotel. Quench your thirst, while savouring every morsel, with the two refreshing hop beverages offered. Every Wednesday night, Dhs200 per head, call 04-2308580.



* Spanish sensation

Join in the fun and celebrations at the Flamenco festival taking place at Seville's, Wafi, this month and tuck into an authentic three-course menu, while watching the traditional Spanish dancers, España Bravo Flamenco who are flying in all the way from Spain.

Available from April 16-19 for Dhs195 per head. Call 04-3244777.

* Friday fun-day

Make it a family weekend by checking out the Family fantastic Friday brunch at JW Marriott Dubai, where kids can decorate cookies, get their faces painted and jump around the bouncy castle, while adults savour seafood from The Market Place, Bavarian dishes from Hofbrauhaus, and Asian cuisine from Bamboo Lagoon.

Available every Friday from Dhs250 per head, call 04-6077977.



* Spring awakening

Get a taste of the new à la carte menu at newly opened Marco Pierre White restaurant Wheeler's, DIFC, which uses seasonal ingredients such as white and green asparagus, rhubarb and squash. Try dishes such as the poached asparagus with truffle hollandaise, mussels marinière, and tomato risotto with spring vegetables.

Available daily, call 04-3860899.

* Stuffed with delight

Make sure you check out the Ravioli festival taking place this month at La Mamma restaurant, Sheraton Abu Dhabi, and enjoy indulgent pasta varieties such as stewed duck ravioli with basil cream and pine seeds, or the giant mushroom and cheese ravioli with butter and sage.

Available from April 13-19. Call 02-6773333.

* Sushi deal!

If you're a big fan of Japanese, then check out the Asian night offer on Fridays at Sakura, Taj Palace Dubai, which offers an assortment of sushi rolls and sashimi at great value prices.

Every Friday, Dhs99 per head, Call 04-2232222.



* Weekend indulgence

Enjoy a relaxing Saturday brunch at the swanky Blue Marlin Ibiza UAE, located in Ghantoot, which offers an assortment of sushi, lamb chops, barbecue meats and seafood, along with unlimited select beverages.

Available on Saturday for Dhs240 per head. Call 050-6671540.

* Neighbourhood dining

If you live in the Arabian Ranches area, head to the Ranches restaurant at the Arabian Ranches Golf Club for the Friday late breakfast, where you can treat yourself to scrumptious breakfast delicacies, cold cuts, and fresh juices and smoothies.

Available on Friday for Dhs99 per head, call 04-3663000.

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Home Cooking

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Tomato & harissa stew with cheddar dumplings, recipe p24



IN THIS SECTION



* Creative ways with chicken, P26



* Cook with versatile, nutritious lentils, P30



* Gluten-free never tasted so good! P54

Make it tonight

Quick and satisfying supper ideas with good-value ingredients.
Recipes SARA BUENFELD
Photographs WILL HEAP

Brilliant meals on a budget

As-you-like-it tortilla

SERVES 3 • PREP 5 MINS • COOK

10-15 MINS **Easy**   **Low cal** **Folate**

This tortilla uses leftovers as the main ingredient and matches them to a storecupboard flavour. Try tuna and greens with pesto, cheese and bacon with mustard, chorizo and peppers with harissa, and salmon with herbs.

6 eggs

2 tsp pesto, or 1 tsp mustard or harissa, or 2 tbsp fresh chopped herbs of your choice

Large handful leftovers such as grated cheese, chopped ham, sliced sausage, cooked bacon rashers, tuna or smoked salmon

3 spring onions, finely chopped
125g cooked pasta or 200g chopped cooked potato

Handful of veg such as frozen spinach or peas, corn, roasted peppers, fried courgettes or mushrooms

1½ tbsp vegetable oil

Tomato salad, to serve (optional)

1 Beat the eggs with seasoning and your chosen background flavour, then add your leftovers. Stir in the spring onions and pasta or potatoes with your selected veg.

2 Turn on the grill to high. Heat the oil in a medium non-stick frying pan and tip in the egg mixture. Cook gently for 10 mins over a low heat until three-quarters set, then flash under the grill to set the top.

Serve with a simple tomato salad.

PER SERVING 343 kcals, protein 24g, carbs 16g, fat 20g, sat fat 6g, fibre 4g, sugar 2g, salt 2.1g

TIP The idea with this tortilla recipe is to clear the odds and ends from your fridge, but don't go too crazy as the egg still needs to be the predominant ingredient, so that it sticks everything together.



Chicken stew

SERVES 8 ● PREP 15 MINS ● COOK 45-50 MINS **Easy** **Low cal** **1 of 5-a-day** **Fibre**

- 1 tbsp sunflower oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, sliced
- 1.4 litres hot chicken stock
- 1 large potato, finely grated
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves
- 2 tsp fresh rosemary leaves
- 1.7kg family packs skinless chicken thighs (count the number in the pack – you need 16 in total)
- 6 carrots, halved lengthways and cut into chunks
- 2 parsnips, halved lengthways and cut into chunks
- 3 leeks, well washed and thickly sliced
- mash and peas, to serve (optional)

1 Heat the oil in your largest pan – an extra-large wok with a lid is ideal. Fry the onion and garlic for a few mins until soft, then pour in the stock and stir in the potato and herbs.

2 Add the chicken and bring to the boil. Stir in the carrots, parsnips and leeks, then cover the pan and leave to simmer on a low heat for 40-45 mins, stirring every now and then, until the chicken is tender. (Cool and freeze any extra portions, and use within 2 months – thaw at room temperature, then reheat in a pan until bubbling.) Serve with mash and peas, if you like.

PER SERVING 445 kcals, protein 36g, carbs 21g, fat 24g, sat fat 6g, fibre 8g, sugar 10g, salt 0.8g

Smoked salmon spaghetti with chilli & lemon

SERVES 3 ● PREP 5 MINS ● COOK 15 MINS **Easy** **Low cal** **Low fat** **Omega-3**

- 300g spaghetti
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
- 120g pack smoked salmon trimmings
- Zest of 1 lemon and juice to taste
- Good handful snipped chives or finely chopped spring onions

1 Cook the spaghetti for 10 mins or following pack instructions until al dente.

2 Meanwhile, heat the oil in a wok or large frying pan and briefly fry the chilli to soften it.

3 Drain the spaghetti, reserving a little of the water, then tip into the wok and, using 2 wooden spoons, toss in the chilli oil until well mixed. Add the salmon, lemon zest and chives or onions, then toss again. Season and add lemon juice to taste.

PER SERVING 433 kcals, protein 22g, carbs 69g, fat 7g, sat fat 1g, fibre 4g, sugar 3g, salt 1.9g >>



Smoked salmon
on a budget



Meat-free supper

Tomato & harissa stew with cheddar dumplings

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 45 MINS

Easy Low cal 2 of 5-a-day Fibre Calcium Folate

- 1 tbsp sunflower oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 4 celery sticks, thickly sliced
- 400g can plum tomatoes
- 1 tbsp harissa
- 2 large courgettes, halved lengthways and thickly sliced
- 400g can chickpeas, drained
- 1 vegetable stock cube
- FOR THE DUMPLINGS**
- 25g butter, diced
- 200g self-raising flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 75g extra mature cheddar, finely grated
- 100ml milk

1 Heat the oil in a large wide-topped casserole dish with a lid, then fry the

onion and celery for 5 mins until softening and starting to colour. Tip in the tomatoes and a can of water, then stir in the harissa, courgettes and chickpeas, and crumble in the stock cube. Cover and simmer for 18 mins until the veg is almost tender. Heat oven to 200C/180C fan.

2 Meanwhile, rub the butter into the flour and baking powder with a good pinch of salt, then mix in the cheese with a round-bladed knife. Two mins before the stew is ready, pour the milk into the dumpling mix and stir with the knife to make a dough. Turn out onto your work surface (no need to flour it), lightly shape into a sausage and cut into 8 equal pieces.

3 Put the dumplings on top of the stew and bake in the oven for 15-20 mins until golden and cooked through.

PER SERVING 444 kcs, protein 16g, carbs 54g, fat 17g, sat fat 8g, fibre 7g, sugar 7g, salt 2.6g



Great for lunchboxes

Spinach & goat's cheese puff

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 25

MINS Easy 1 of 5-a-day Calcium Folate

- 375g pack ready-rolled puff pastry
- 400g frozen spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
- 2 eggs
- 150ml milk
- 250g soft goat's cheese
- ¼ nutmeg, grated

1 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan. Unroll the pastry and put in a large Swiss roll tin. Trim any excess pastry at either end if necessary. Prick all over with a fork, then bake for 10 mins.

2 Use a hand blender to blitz the spinach with the eggs, milk, half the goat's cheese and nutmeg, until the spinach is chopped but not puréed. Take the pastry from the oven and press down the centre, as it will have puffed up. Spoon on the filling, scatter with the rest of the cheese, then bake for 15 mins until the filling is set.

PER SERVING 633 kcs, protein 26g, carbs 35g, fat 43g, sat fat 24g, fibre 3g, sugar 4g, salt 1.9g

TIP You can buy frozen spinach chopped or as loose leaves of baby spinach – and you can use either for this recipe.

JASHANMAL

GO GREEN



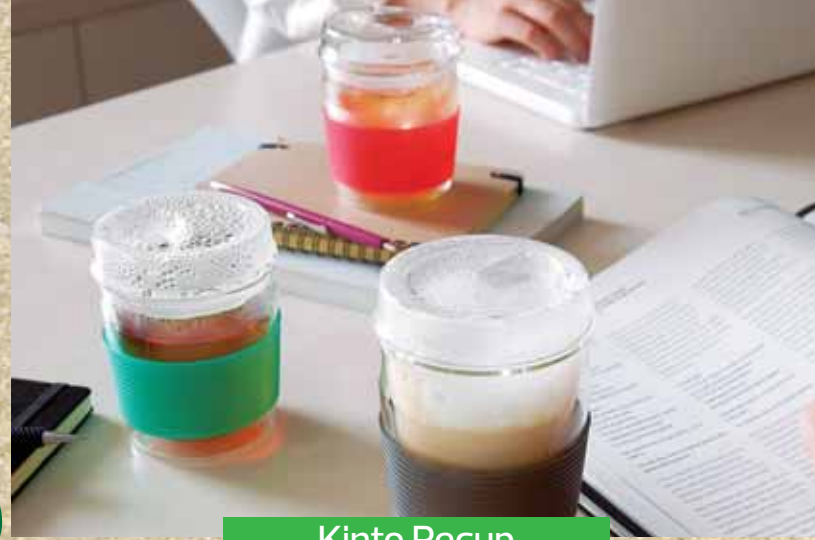
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Chicken confidential

It's such a versatile ingredient to include in your weeknight meals, but if you're finding it tricky to come up with new, healthy ways to serve it, try these ideas.



Chicken & orange salad

SERVES 2 • PREP 10 MINS •

COOK 5 MINS **Easy** 

150g pack green beans, trimmed
1 fennel bulb
1 large avocado
100g bag watercress, roughly chopped
2 oranges
2 tbs olive oil
2 cooked boneless, skinless chicken breasts, shredded

1 Cook the beans in a large pan of boiling salted water for 4-5 mins. Cool under cold water and put in a bowl. Finely slice the fennel bulb, cutting away the core.

2 Peel and slice the avocado and add to the bowl with the watercress. Peel the oranges, cut out the segments and add to bowl. Squeeze the rest of the orange juice into another bowl and mix with the olive oil to make a dressing. Toss the salad in the dressing, scatter over the chicken, then serve.

PER SERVING 572 kJ, protein 45g, carbs 19g, fat 36g, sat fat 5g, fibre 10g, sugar 17g, salt 0.3g



Tamarind chicken with golden mash

SERVES 4 ● PREP 10 MINS ●
COOK 25 MINS **Easy** **Low fat**

1kg potatoes, peeled and cubed
2 tsp turmeric
500g broccoli
4 tsp tamarind paste
2 tbsp mango chutney
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
100ml natural yoghurt
1 tbsp korma paste
5 spring onions, trimmed and thinly sliced

1 Heat the grill. Put the potatoes in a pan of cold water, stir in the turmeric, then bring to the boil. Simmer for 12-15 mins until tender. Steam the broccoli in a metal colander or sieve over the potato pan for 4-5 mins until tender.

2 Mix together the tamarind paste and mango chutney. Make a few slashes in each chicken breast and place on a baking tray. Brush with the tamarind mixture, then grill for 5 mins on each side or until cooked through and sticky.

3 Drain the potatoes. Mash with the yoghurt, korma paste and seasoning, then keep warm. To serve, stir most of the spring onions into the mash, then spoon onto plates. Scatter with the remaining spring onions, serve alongside the sticky chicken and broccoli.

PER SERVING 394 kcals, protein 41g, carbs 53g, fat 3g, sat fat 1g, fibre 3g, sugar 10g, salt 0.7g

Sticky marmalade chicken

SERVES 4 ● PREP 5 MINS ● COOK 20 MINS **Easy** **Low fat**

4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts
1 tbsp olive oil
300ml chicken stock
4 tbsp fine-cut marmalade
1 tsp fresh thyme leaves, or ½ tsp dried

1 Season the chicken with pepper and salt, if you like, then fry in the oil for 8-10 mins, turning once, until golden. Add the stock, marmalade and thyme.

2 Simmer for 5 mins, remove the chicken, boil the mixture hard to reduce to a syrupy sauce, then pour over the chicken. Serve with rice or mash to mop up the sauce, plus a fresh green salad.

PER SERVING 215 kcals, protein 34g, carbs 11g, fat 4g, sat fat 1g, fibre none, sugar 9g, salt 0.5g >>

TIP As an alternative, try using ginger marmalade, with the juice and grated zest of a small orange. For added heat, add a pinch of chilli flakes.





Spiced chicken & cauliflower pilaf

SERVES 4 ● PREP 5 MINS ● COOK 15 MINS **Easy** **Low fat**

4 chicken breasts, skin on
1 tbsp medium curry powder (choose one with turmeric in it)
200g basmati rice
500ml chicken stock
200g cauliflower florets
200g frozen green beans
1 lemon, halved lengthways and sliced
small bunch coriander, leaves and stalks separated and roughly chopped

1 Heat a flameproof casserole and brown the chicken, skin-side down. Add the curry powder and rice, fry for 1 min, then stir in the stock.

2 Add the cauliflower, beans, lemon and coriander stalks. Turn chicken skin-side up, bring to the boil, then simmer with the lid on for 10 mins, until chicken is cooked through and the rice tender. Sprinkle over coriander leaves and serve.

PER SERVING 360 kcs, protein 41g, carbs 45g, fat 3g, sat fat 1g, fibre 3g, sugar 3g, salt 0.77g

Chicken salad with broccoli

SERVES 4 ● PREP 15 MINS ● COOK 10 MINS **Easy** **Low fat**

2 broccoli heads, cut into florets
2 tbsp olive oil
5 shallots, finely sliced
2 red chillies, deseeded and sliced
2 garlic cloves, sliced
Handful pitted black olives
4 roast chicken breasts, sliced
4 tbsp soy sauce

1 Steam the broccoli for 4 mins until just tender, tip into a large bowl, then season. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a pan, then fry the shallots for 2 mins. Add the chillies and garlic, then cook for a further 4 mins until softened.

2 Remove the shallots, chilli and garlic with a slotted spoon, then mix with the broccoli, olives and chicken. Add the soy sauce to the pan, warm over a medium heat, then pour over the salad. Serve warm or cold.

PER SERVING 291 kcs, protein 42g, carbs 4g, fat 12g, sat fat 2g, fibre 3g, sugar 3g, salt 3.05g





Warm chicken & chicory salad

SERVES 4-6 ● PREP 30 MINS PLUS RESTING ●
COOK 2½ HRS **Easy**

1.6kg whole chicken
1 tbsp butter, at room temperature
200ml sherry vinegar, plus 1 tbsp
200g frozen peas
1 tbsp olive oil
½ tsp caster sugar
50g raisins
15g pack dill, roughly chopped
3 heads chicory, green, red or a mixture
50g mixed salad leaves
100g pine nuts, toasted

1 Heat oven to 160C/140C fan. Rub the chicken all over with butter and season well, inside and out. Sit it in a small roasting tin, pour the sherry vinegar around, and cover with foil. Roast for 2 hrs.
2 Meanwhile, get all of the remaining ingredients ready. Boil the peas for 1 min until

just tender. Drain well, plunge into cold water to cool quickly, then drain again and set aside.

3 When the chicken has cooked for 2 hrs, remove from oven. Pour the juices into a jug, then increase oven temp to 220C/200C fan. Roast for a further 20-30 mins (without foil) until golden.

4 Skim the fat from the juices, then boil until you have about 100ml of juices left. Stir in the extra tbsp vinegar, the olive oil and caster sugar, then tip onto a serving dish with the raisins.

5 Leave the chicken until cool enough to handle (or pop on a pair of clean rubber gloves), then tear the meat in large pieces from the carcass, onto the serving dish. Add the dill, chicory, salad leaves, pine nuts and peas, then toss together with your hands. Serve straightaway with some crusty bread, if you like.

PER SERVING 556 kcals, protein 38g, carbs 10g, fat 40g, sat fat 9g, fibre 3g, sugar 8g, salt 0.4g **GF**

TIP An ideal accompaniment to meat, chicory leaves stimulate the liver, which enables fat to be digested more easily. Rich in bone-building nutrients, chicory supplies good levels of vitamins C and K, calcium and phosphorus.

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Flavour of Spain



Try this simple recipe to give chicken a continental twist.

Spanish braised chicken

SERVES 4 ● PREP 5 mins ● COOK 25 mins

Easy **Low fat**

1 large onion, sliced
1 tbsp olive oil
1 garlic clove, crushed
8 boneless, skinless chicken thighs
2 Cox's or Russet apples, cored and cut into chunks
100g ready-to-eat dried prunes
150ml white wine
Handful of chopped parsley

1 Heat the oil in a heavy pan over a high heat, add the onion and cook for 2 mins, then add garlic. Add the chicken and cook for a few mins, turning each piece until they all have a little colour. Add the apples and prunes, stir well, pour in the wine and bring to the boil.

2 Simmer, covered, for 20 mins until the chicken is tender. Sprinkle with parsley. Serve with mashed root veg, if you like.



The La Tourangelle extra virgin olive oil is hand-crafted using age-old cold pressed methods in Provence. Available at select supermarkets and markets.



Take some lentils...

For the ultimate healthy fast food, just open a pack of lentils and you're ready to go.

Lamb cutlets with lentil & feta

SERVES 4 ● PREP 5 MINS ● COOK 15 MINS **Easy** 🍴

300g frozen peas
500g Puy lentils, cooked
4 tbsp white wine vinegar
2 tbsp caster sugar

1 small bunch mint, roughly chopped
200g pack reduced-fat feta, crumbled
8 lamb cutlets
1 tsp olive oil

1 Cook peas in boiling water for 3-4 mins until just tender, then drain. Mix with the lentils, vinegar, sugar and mint, then crumble in the feta and season well.

2 Heat a griddle pan, brush the cutlets with a little oil and season. Cook in the hot pan for 4 mins on each side until browned and the middle is pink. Serve the salad topped with two cutlets each.

PER SERVING 716 kcals, protein 52g, carbs 33g, fat 43g, sat fat 22g, fibre 7g, sugar 12g, salt 3.38g



Salmon & Puy lentil salad with olive dressing

SERVES 4 • PREP 20 MINS • COOK 6 MINS **Easy**

FOR THE DRESSING

85g Kalamata olives, stoned
5 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp red wine vinegar
1 small garlic clove, crushed
1 tsp Dijon mustard
2 tbsp chopped basil (or a dash of pesto)
1 tbsp small capers

FOR THE SALAD

200g pack fine green beans, halved

3-4 eggs (depending on how much salmon you have)

500g Puy lentils, cooked

4 large tomatoes, deseeded and roughly chopped

175-200g cooked leftover salmon, flaked into large chunks

Good handful of rocket leaves

1 Chop half the olives (set the rest aside), then mix with the remaining dressing ingredients in a bowl.

2 Boil the green beans for 5 mins, then refresh under cold water. Put the eggs in cold water, bring to the boil, then cook for 5 mins. Cool, shell and halve or quarter.

3 Heat the lentils in the microwave for 2 mins per pack. Tip into a bowl and toss with the tomatoes, most of the dressing, the whole olives and green beans. Arrange the eggs and salmon on top, scatter with the rocket and finish by drizzling over the remaining dressing. Serve with crusty bread.

PER SERVING 530 kcals, protein 33g, carbs 35g, fat 30g, sat fat 5g, fibre 12g, sugar 7g, salt 2.60g >>



Lime & coconut dal

SERVES 8 ● PREP 5 MINS ● COOK 15 MINS **Easy**

1-2 tbsp mild curry paste
160ml can coconut cream
Zest of 1 lime
1 heaped tsp brown sugar
500g Puy lentils, cooked
Handful chopped coriander
2 warmed naan breads

1 Heat the curry paste in a pan for 1 min. Pour in the coconut cream and stir to combine. Add the lime zest, brown sugar and Puy lentils. Bring to a simmer and cook for 10 mins, adding a squeeze of lime juice and seasoning.
2 Stir through the coriander and serve with warmed naan breads, cut into fingers. Sprinkle extra coriander on the dal if you like. Great warm or at room temperature.

PER SERVING 104 kcals, protein 3g, carbs 7g, fat 8g, sat fat 6g, fibre 2g, sugar 2g, salt 0.39g

HOW TO COOK LENTILS

You can either use pre-cooked lentils or make your own for these recipes. To cook puy lentils, simply rinse in a colander, add to a saucepan of water and bring to the boil, then simmer for around 25 mins, stirring occasionally; they turn tender when cooked. season to taste.

Saucy roast sausages with lentils

SERVES 4 ● PREP 5 MINS ● COOK 25 MINS **Easy**

4 tsp olive oil
8 pork sausages
400g cherry tomatoes, half halved, half left whole
2 red or white onions, sliced
500g Puy lentils, cooked

1 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan. Put the sausages in a small roasting tin, drizzle with half the oil and roast for 25 mins – adding the tomatoes with 8 mins before the end of cooking and give the tin a good shake.
2 Heat the rest of the oil in a non-stick pan and soften the onion for 5 mins. Stir in the lentils, with a splash of water and gently heat through. Season the lentils, then spoon onto plates and top with the sausages, tomatoes and any juices.
PER SERVING 561 kcals, protein 37g, carbs 45g, fat 27g, sat fat 7g, fibre 8g, sugar 9g, salt 1.94g

Quinoa, lentil & feta salad

SERVES 4 ● PREP 15 MINS ●

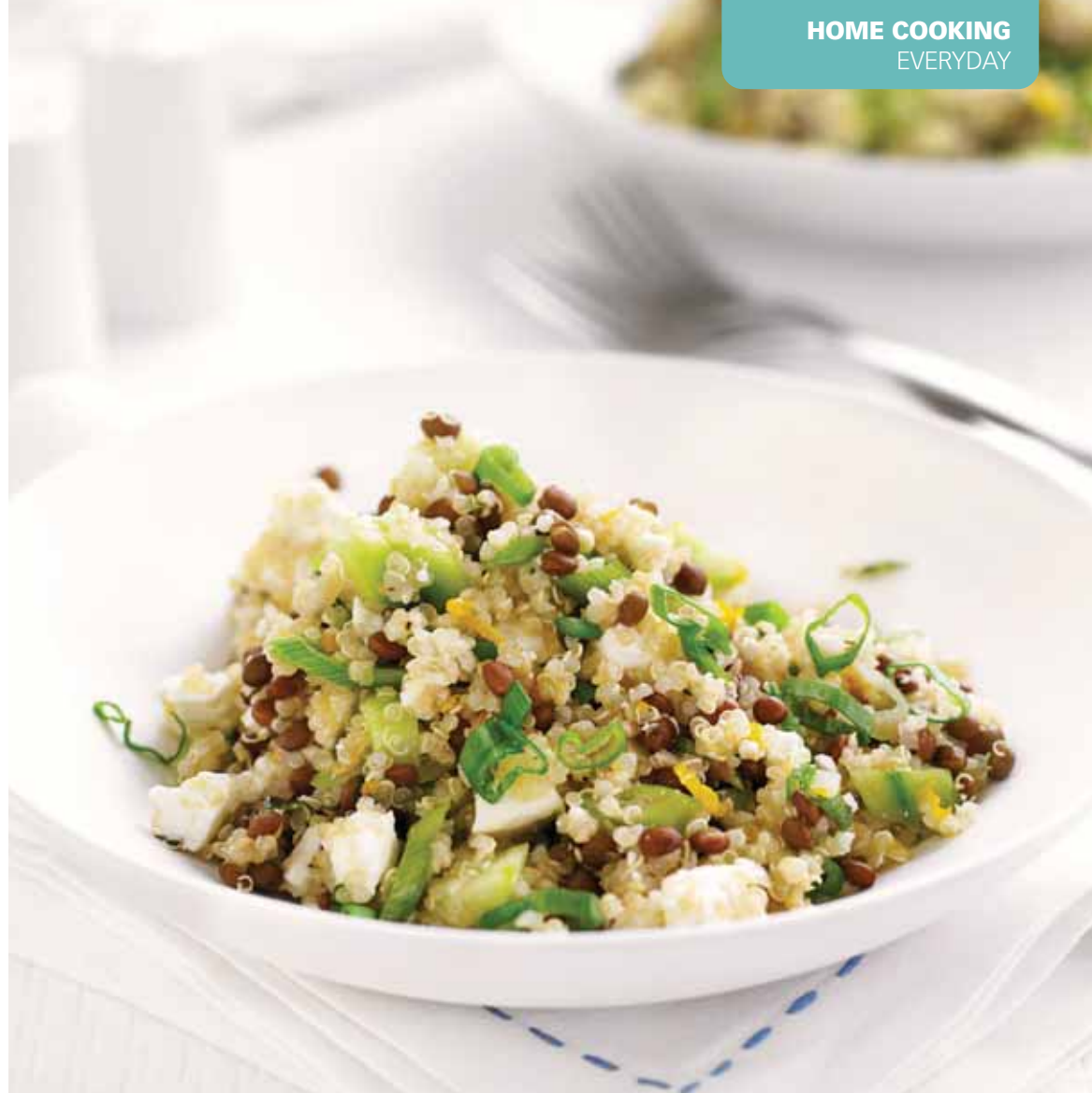
COOK 15 MINS **Easy** **Low fat** **200g quinoa****1 tsp olive oil****1 shallot or ½ onion, finely chopped****2 tbsp tarragon, roughly chopped****500g Puy lentils, cooked****¼ cucumber, lightly peeled and diced****100g feta, crumbled****6 spring onions, thinly sliced****Zest and juice of 1 orange****1 tbsp red or white wine vinegar**

1 Cook the quinoa in a large pan of boiling water for 10-15 mins until tender, drain well, then set aside to cool.

2 Meanwhile, heat the oil in a small pan, then cook the shallot or onion for a few mins until softened. Add the tarragon, stir well, then remove from the heat.

3 Stir the softened shallot and tarragon into the cooled quinoa along with the lentils, cucumber, feta, spring onions, orange zest and juice and vinegar. Toss well together and serve.

PER SERVING 286 kcals, protein 16g, carbs 39g, fat 9g, sat fat 3g, fibre 2g, sugar 6g, salt 1.48g

**Hot-smoked salmon, lentil & pomegranate salad**


SERVES 2 ● PREP 15 MINS PLUS

MARINATING ● NO COOK **Easy****2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil****Juice of ½ lemon****1 garlic clove, finely chopped****2 tbsp roughly chopped tarragon****1 tsp clear honey****1 small red onion, thinly sliced****500g Puy lentils, cooked****140g hot-smoked salmon****20g pack flat-leaf parsley, leaves picked****1 pomegranate, seeds removed****Toasted pita bread, to serve**

1 Combine the oil, lemon juice, garlic, tarragon and honey in a large bowl and season. Toss in the red onion and lentils and set aside to marinate for 10 mins.

2 Break the salmon into large flakes and

fold into the salad with the parsley and pomegranate. Serve with toasted pitta.

PER SERVING 382 kcals, protein 27g, carbs 31g, fat 18g, sat fat 3g, fibre 11g, sugar 13g, salt 3.19g 

TIP MAKE IT MEATY**Grilled spiced chicken & pomegranate salad**

Make the salad as before, leaving out the salmon and swapping the tarragon for mint. Mix **2 tsp harissa** with **2 tbsp yoghurt** and use to marinate 2 slashed, **skinless chicken breasts** for 10 mins. Grill the chicken for 4-6 mins on each side, then serve with the salad.

An elegant tradition

There's nothing quite like afternoon tea for a refined, relaxed dining experience. At Sofitel Dubai Jumeirah Beach, the ritual is taken to new heights, with a French twist.



Afternoon tea is a quintessentially English tradition that started in the year 1840, by Anna, the seventh Duchess of Bedford.

The story goes, she would get hungry around 4pm every afternoon, as there was a long gap between lunch and dinner which was typically served at 8pm. So, she asked for a tray of tea, bread and butter, and cake to be brought to her in the late afternoon. She enjoyed the ritual so much, she started inviting friends to join her – and the trend caught on, with high society ladies changing into gowns, gloves and hats to turn it into a fashionable social event.

At the Sofitel Dubai Jumeirah Beach Hotel, you don't have to be royalty to partake of the tradition, as a variety of traditional English delights with a French twist, such as finger sandwiches, freshly baked cakes, miniature pastries, macarons and scones are served in the informal, relaxed atmosphere of Plantation, the hotel's 'winter garden' lounge. The contemporary décor, in shades of blues, greens and browns is inspired by French colonial design – from the solid walnut floor, to the traditional ceiling fans and large linen pendant lights suspended from the conservatory-style roof. The light interior is furnished with deep comfortable armchairs, creating an inviting and laid-back atmosphere that spills out onto an outdoor terrace.

Plantation is a great destination not just for tea though, as it is open all day and also offers Late Arabic Breakfast served from 6am-3pm, French pastries, light meals from à la carte menu and an extensive list of beverages.

This month, you can experience the very best of traditional English Afternoon Tea at Plantation, as Sofitel Dubai Jumeirah Beach celebrates St. George's Day from April 21 to 27. Afternoon Tea packages starts from Dhs130, and is served from 3pm-5pm. Call 04-4484733.

HOST AN AFTERNOON TEA PARTY AT HOME

Make note of these chef's tips:

- Use English cucumber in making the sandwiches, it makes a huge difference to the taste.
- Stick to traditional items like smoked salmon.
- Serve Devonshire clotted cream with scones – it is an essential component of traditional afternoon tea.
- If you're making sandwiches ahead of time, cover them with a damp paper towel so they don't dry out.
- Cut cakes and pastries in different shapes – whether it's triangles or small squares. Always make sure they are cut in the same size for each person.
- Serve mini macarons – they are delicious with tea.
- Always use fresh bread, and have wholewheat bread options for your health-conscious guests.
- Have a few different varieties of teas on offer.

S O F I T E L
LUXURY HOTELS

سوفيتل جميرا بيتش دبي
DUBAI JUMEIRAH BEACH

For restaurant reservations,
call 04-4484733.

Kitchen notes

Nutrition advice,
expert cooking tips
and product picks
for your pantry.

Spice is nice!

Aveem foods has introduced a new range of high-quality spices in the market, sourced from the land of spices, India. The range includes staples of Indian cooking such as turmeric, curry powder, fennel seeds, fenugreek seeds and cumin seeds, as well as some Arabian-influenced spices like sumac and dried mint. Each of these spices not only add flavour and aroma to food, but also offer multiple health benefits, from aiding digestion (anise seeds) and detoxifying (black pepper), to having an anti-inflammatory effect (curry powder). From Dhs3, available at Union co-op and Al Maya supermarkets.



Gourmet grocer

Pssst...We've discovered a specialty store! Emirates gourmet general trading is a little foodie haven tucked away in Jumeirah Plaza, Jumeirah Beach Road, and offers an impressive selection of American and European gourmet products including baby cucumbers and onions antipasti, artichoke pesto, natural mango salsa dressing, and organic and flavour-infused pastas such as Taglioni with truffles. If you can't make it to the store, simply place your delivery online on emiratesgourmet.com.

Look what we found!

3 great new products for your kitchen



Thursday night curries just got a whole lot easier with this preservative-free Island Curries chicken curry paste. Dhs24, at Milk and Honey.



Enjoy nutritious gluten- and yeast-free pancakes and muffins with this maple flavoured Breads from Anna pancake mix. Dhs35, at glutenfreesupermarket.ae.

Serve a plate of crudité's with these Milco labneh dippers, available in paprika chilli, olive, garlic and herbs, and tzatziki flavours. Dhs6, at leading supermarkets.



Dalia's tip of the month

I always make my own garlic paste rather than using store-bought ones. Simply add salt to garlic cloves in a mortar and pestle – the salt softens the garlic, and makes it easier to form a paste out of the cloves. And fresh garlic paste tastes so much better!

SMART FOOD SWAPS

266 calories
1 cup of chilli con carne

455 calories
1 Chilli dog in bun

276 calories
1 Bagel with salmon, cream cheese and tomato

Swap for

or 107 calories or
1 (28g) puff pastry sausage roll

Health update>

Looking for multiple nutritional benefits in a cup? Swap your daily coffee for South African rooibos tea, and experience the change in your body. According to recent studies, rooibos lowers glucose levels as it contains the antioxidant aspalathin – that is available only rooibos – as well as another compound, rutin, which is known to also help lower glucose levels. The antioxidant rich tea is recommended to lower blood pressure, treat diabetes, boost the immune system, and help prevent cardiovascular attacks. Hala Barghout, nutritionist at Platform3 fitness centre, says that rooibos tea not only offers a variety of health benefits, but is also tasty; she recommends drinking six cups a day.

Build a burger

Make the most of the soon-to-end alfresco weather with a barbecue get together, and impress your friends with one of these gourmet burgers – from the unique to the healthy, there's something for all tastes.

Photographs ANAS CHERUR

Hickory burger

SERVES 4

Recipe from Talal Jaradat, executive chef at Mario Biker's café (04-3493585).

4 Wagyu beef burger patties (around 220g each)

80g mushroom

80g red onion

40ml olive oil

4 sesame burger bun

120ml hickory sauce

4 whole egg

4 or 5 cheddar cheese slices

2 tbsp mayonnaise

48g iceberg lettuce

4 tomato slice

40g gherkins

4 tsp salt

1 In a pan, sauté the mushroom and onions in olive oil, and season.

2 Fry an egg in an easy over way and set aside.

3 Slice burger bun in the middle and place the outer surface of the buns, on the grill, to get the grill line marks.

4 Grill the burger patty for 8-10 mins. Apply the hickory sauce on top. Add the sautéed onions and mushroom, the fried egg and then the cheddar cheese slices. Place carefully in the oven for 2 to 3 mins.

5 Apply mayonnaise on both sides of the burger buns. Add iceberg lettuce on the base of the burger bun, and top with the tomato slice and gherkins.

6 Once the cheese has melted on the burger patty, take it out of the oven and place on the base burger bun. Place the other half of the bun on top and serve with chips and hickory sauce on the side.

Text & styling NICOLA MONTEATH | Props from CRATE & BARREL : 04-3990125



Salmon burger

SERVES 4

Recipe from Adrian Becerril-Garcia,
head chef at Burger Rebel (04-3244252).

800g skinless salmon fillets

50g Dijon mustard

2 shallots, peeled and cut into chunks

60g bread crumbs

Salt

Black pepper

Olive oil

Potato buns, toasted (Available at Modern
bakery)

Lollo rosso leaves (Available at Spinney's)

200g avocado, sliced

50g green onions, finely chopped

FOR THE CILANTRO MAYONNAISE

6 tbsp mayonnaise

1 clove garlic, minced

50g cilantro, finely chopped

5g cayenne pepper

Squeeze of lemon

1 In a small bowl, combine cilantro mayonnaise ingredients and stir until combined. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

2 Cube the salmon, and blend 1/4 of it with the mustard, in a food processor. Process until the mixture becomes a paste. Add the shallots towards the end, so they are also finely chopped.

3 Place the mixture into a bowl, mix with the rest of the salmon and add the breadcrumbs, by hand. Season with a pinch of salt and fresh pepper, and shape into four patties.

4 Heat oil in a non-stick skillet, over medium-high heat. Once the skillet is heated, carefully cook the patties for 2-3 mins per side, turning once.

5 Layer with the leaves, salmon patty, avocado, green onions and a splash of cilantro mayo.



Camel meat burger

SERVES 4

Recipe from Amit Gomes, chef de cuisine at
The Emirates Palace, Abu Dhabi (02-6909000).

100g raw papaya

A pinch of salt

800g camel meat, minced (available in
select supermarkets)

80g cumin powder

40g coriander powder

40g harissa paste

4 burger buns

3-4 tbsp mayonnaise

200g iceberg lettuce

200g tomato, sliced

40g halloumi cheese, grilled

40g mustard

200g onions, fried

40g jalapenos

FOR THE CHICKPEA FRITTERS

200g chickpeas

4l milk

30ml lemon juice

Flour, to coat the fritters

1 Peel the papaya, and place in a saucepan with enough water to cover it. Add salt and cook until the papaya is softened. Blend to make a purée and set aside.

2 Add the spices, harissa paste and papaya purée to the camel mince, and mix well. Set aside for 30 mins and form into a burger patty.

3 Sear the patty in a flat pan for 1-2 mins and finish off in the oven for 6-10 mins.

4 To make the chickpea fritters, soak chickpeas in water overnight. Drain the water, then boil in milk, till completely cooked. Once the chickpeas are cooked and the milk is absorbed, blend well. Place the mixture on a flat tray and refrigerate. After it has cooled down, cut into baton shapes, and pat sprinkled flour over them before deep frying.

5 Cut the burger bun in half and grill for a few seconds.

6 On the bottom half of the bun, spread mayonnaise, then place lettuce, sliced tomatoes, grilled halloumi and the patty. Spread some mustard on the patty and top with crispy fried onions and jalapenos. Serve with the chickpea fritters on the side. **GF**



Celebrate Songkran

Dusit Thani Dubai invites you on a culinary voyage to mark the occasion of Songkran, the Thai New Year. Come and be a part of the rich heritage of Thailand and sample delicacies and flavours from this culturally rich nation.

8 - 15 April - Songkran Special in Benjarong

Expect authentic Royal Thai Cuisine in a traditional Thai setting, complemented by classical dance and music performances.

12 April - Songkran Brunch on the 24th floor

Our famous Friday Brunch with a twist of Thai street food to wet the appetite. Prices start at AED 185 per person inclusive of soft beverages



For enquiries and reservations please contact:
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www.Dusit.com

Dusit Thani
DUBAI

Tapas, Thai-style

Celebrate the Thai New Year with these contemporary dishes from Chairat Youngsuk of Blue Elephant, Al Bustan Rotana – it's effortless entertaining at its best.



Thai national Chairat Youngsuk has had over 20 years of restaurant experience, having begun his

career as a humble kitchen helper at a café in Bangkok. Since then, he has gained experience everywhere – from Morocco to Myanmar – before moving to Dubai and joining Blue Elephant at Al Bustan Rotana in 2008. Here he shares three Thai delicacies, which showcase his talent in his native cuisine. Serve them as a tapas menu at a cocktail party, or simply enjoy them as a snack.

Mieng kham

This is a traditional Thai snack of many light bites wrapped in cha pu leaves (wild betel leaves).

SERVES 4

32 pcs of cha pu leaves (available at specialty Asian stores)

8 red Thai chillies, sliced

2 limes, diced with skin

2 red onions, diced

120g ginger, diced

FOR THE DIPPING SAUCE

10g galangal, sliced

15g coconut, grated and roasted

5g of peanut, roasted and then ground

15ml water

500g palm sugar

100ml light soya sauce

1 For the sauce, wrap the sliced galangal in foil and place on the gas flame for 5 mins, in order to develop the full aroma. Pound the galangal and coconut in a mortar and pestle. Add the ground peanut, mix and set aside.

2 Boil the water with palm sugar, add the light soya sauce and boil at medium heat for 2 mins. Remove from heat and combine with the ground peanut mix.

3 Wrap the diced condiments in the cha pu leaves, shape into a cone and serve with the dipping sauce. >>



Spicy scallop and eggplant salad

SERVES 4

12 Japanese scallops
1 kaffir lime leaf
Salt
2 medium eggplants
1 red onion, chopped
10g coriander leaves, chopped
50g spring onion, chopped
1 tbsp corn oil
8 pc dried chilli, for garnish

FOR THE EGGPLANT SALAD DRESSING

3 tbsp fish sauce
3 tbsp lime juice
10g garlic, chopped
10g Thai chillies, chopped
1 tsp white sugar

1 Marinate the scallops with kaffir lime leaves and salt for 10 mins

2 For the eggplant salad, make holes in the eggplants using a fork and place on a grill for about 20 mins or until cooked. Set aside to cool before peeling, then chop and mash.

3 Mix the fish sauce with the lime juice, garlic, chillies and sugar. Add the dressing to the peeled eggplants, then add the red onions, coriander and spring onion to make the salad.

4 Lightly season and sear the scallops in corn oil, on both sides, for 2 mins.

5 On a plate, add a spoonful of the eggplant salad, place one scallop on top and garnish with the dried chilli, before serving.

Lamb skewers with mint and coriander dip


SERVES 4

500g lamb tenderloin, minced
 200g massaman curry paste
 20g garlic, finely chopped
 4 red Thai chillies, finely chopped
 10g mint leaves, finely chopped
 80ml oyster sauce
 5g white pepper powder
 12 bamboo skewers
 1 frozen paratha (available at all supermarkets)
 4 large green leaves of cos lettuce
 2 pieces of lime cut in half
 4 pieces red Thai chillies
FOR THE MINT AND CORIANDER DIP
 25g mint leaves
 25g coriander leaves
 200ml plain yoghurt
 1 tbsp white sugar
 Salt

1 Combine the minced lamb with the massaman curry paste, garlic, chillies, mint leaves, oyster sauce and white pepper. Shape 50g of meat on each bamboo skewer.

2 Grill both sides of the skewers for 10 mins or until cooked.

3 Blend the mint and coriander leaves with the yoghurt. Add sugar and salt and set aside.

4 Pan fry both sides of the paratha for 2 mins then cut into 4 pcs. Shred the lettuce leaves and place on each piece of paratha. Serve with the skewers and dip on the side. 



Cooking with kids

Get children involved in these clever ways to cook nutritious, versatile carrots, and you won't hear a complaint about eating veg again!

Age
3-6

Carrot hummous with pita dippers

MAKES ENOUGH FOR 4 • TAKES 15 MINS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large carrot, peeled, cut into chunks and boiled until very tender
- 1 tub hummous
- 1 lemon, halved
- Small bunch coriander (optional)
- 2 pita breads or 4 small ones, toasted and sliced

EQUIPMENT

- Rotary or box grater
- Children's scissors

PER SERVING 353 kcal, protein 9g, carbs 30g, fat 23g, sat fat 3g, fibre 5g, sugar 5g, salt 1.2g

Healthy snack



1 Grate the cooked carrot – don't worry if it turns to mush, this is what you want.



3 Add a squeeze of lemon juice, but mind you don't squirt it in your eyes.



2 Tip the hummous into a bowl, add the carrot, mix well.



4 Snip the coriander into little pieces using scissors and stir it into the hummous. Serve with the toasted pita bread.

TOP TIP FOR PARENTS

This all-in-one dish contributes to vitamin A and C intake, which is especially important for those who eat little fresh fruit and veg. Cooking the carrots in chunks preserves an anti-cancer agent called falcarinol, while including the veg in the cooking liquor reduces the loss of valuable water-soluble nutrients.



Chicken pie with a carrot thatch

SERVES 4 • TAKES 1½ hrs

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large carrot or 2 small
- 1 large potato or 2 small
- 2 tbsp butter, melted
- 1 slice cooked ham
- 3 chicken breast fillets
- 3 tbsp frozen peas, defrosted
- 4 tbsp double cream

EQUIPMENT

- Peeler
- Rotary or box grater
- Children's scissors
- Pie dish

Age
5-9

A lovely meal
for your family

PER SERVING 308 kcals, protein 29g, carbs 13g, fat 16g,
sat fat 9g, fibre 2g, sugar 3g, salt 0.44g



1 Ask a grown-up to boil the carrot and potato whole for 5 minutes, then put them in a bowl of cold water to cool down. When cold, peel them carefully.



3 Put the grated carrot and potato in a large bowl, add the melted butter and mix it all together.



5 Put the chicken and ham in a pie dish with the peas and cream and give everything a stir.



2 Grate the carrot and potato (cut them into chunks first if you are using a rotary grater).



4 Cut the ham into small pieces using scissors or a small knife, then cut the chicken into pieces.



6 Spoon the carrot thatch onto the pie and ask your grown-up helper to put the pie in the oven for 50 minutes or until the chicken and topping are cooked through. >>



Teatime treat



Frosted carrot squares

MAKES 6-12 • TAKES 1 HR PLUS COOLING

INGREDIENTS

200g carrots, peeled
175g soft brown sugar
200g self-raising flour
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
2 tsp cinnamon
Zest of 1 orange
2 eggs
150ml sunflower oil

FOR THE ICING: 50g soft butter, 75g icing sugar, 200g soft cheese, sprinkles (optional)

EQUIPMENT

- Rotary or box grater
- Large bowl
- Sieve
- 18cm square tin, lined with parchment

PER SERVING (cut into 6) 665 kcs, protein 8g, carbs 72g, fat 40g, sat fat 13g, fibre 2g, sugar 47g, salt 1.33g



1 Ask your grown-up helper to turn the oven on to 180C/160C fan. Grate the carrots on the fine side of the grater, then tip them into a large bowl.



3 Break the eggs into a bowl (scoop out any bits of shell), then add them to the bowl along with the oil. Mix everything together well.



5 To make the icing, mix the butter and icing sugar together, then stir in the soft cheese until smooth.



2 Sift the sugar, flour, bicarb and cinnamon on top of the carrot, then add the orange zest and mix everything around a bit.



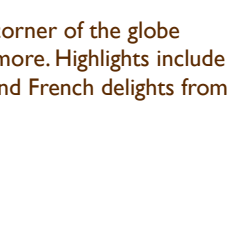
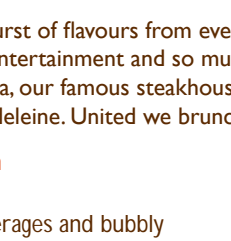
4 Scoop the cake mix into your tin and level the top. **Ask a grown-up** to put it in the oven for 30 minutes or until the cake is cooked. Cool.



6 When the cake is cool, spread the top with the icing and cut into squares. Decorate with sprinkles, if you like. 



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Learn to: Make a terrine



BBC MasterChef judge John Torode's recipe can be made ahead and frozen – ready to be served as part of a buffet, or as a special starter. Follow this step-by-step guide to perfect this restaurant-style recipe.



1 Take time to finely dice the poultry – first slice it into thin strips, then cut across. Reserve the best bits to add texture to the terrine, and use the fattier pieces for the minced part.



2 Before lining your loaf tin or terrine mould with bacon, run the back of a knife along the length of the rashers to stretch them a little.



3 Reserve some of the rashers to cover the top of the terrine, and use the rest to line the inside of the tin, overlapping slightly to fit.



4 Pack the meat into the lined tin. Once filled, sharply tap the tin on the work surface to level the mixture and remove any air bubbles.



5 Bake the covered terrine in a water bath, so that it cooks gently. Putting a folded tea towel in the roasting tin will stop the terrine moving and diffuse a little of the heat.



6 Once cool, put a strip of foil or card on top of the terrine, then weigh it down with a few heavy cans or weights from a balance scale to compress the texture. Chill overnight.

Game terrine

CUTS INTO 8 SLICES ● PREP 30 MINS
PLUS MARINATING, COOLING AND CHILLING

● COOK 1½ HRS **A little effort** **Folate** **Iron** **P**

Some of the meat for this textured terrine is chopped and some is minced. The whole lot is left to marinate before it is cooked the next day. Take time with this, as it is really worth it.

1 boneless duck breast, skin on
(about 175g)

300g smoked streaky bacon

300g boneless, skinless
chicken thighs

500g chicken livers, trimmed

140g mixed game, such as skinless
pheasant breast, pigeon
or additional duck

½ tbsp chopped garlic

1 tsp ground allspice

1 tsp juniper berries, finely ground

1 tbsp chopped parsley

2 tbsp Armagnac or any other brandy

100ml dry white wine

50ml chicken stock

A little butter, for greasing

Toasts and cornichons, to serve

1 Carefully cut the duck skin from the duck breast, then very finely chop the skin. Reserve 12 bacon rashers for lining the tin. Cut all the meat and remaining bacon into 1cm pieces, keeping the different meats separate (Step 1, left). Put all the best bits to one side.

2 Reserve the chopped bacon and, from the best bits, reserve 100g chopped

chicken, 250g chicken livers, half the mixed game, half the duck and half the duck skin.

3 Put all the remaining meat and duck skin into a food processor (include any fatter pieces) and blend to a mince. Transfer to a bowl and add the garlic, allspice, juniper berries, parsley, Armagnac or brandy, wine and stock. Mix in the reserved chopped meat and marinate in the fridge overnight.

4 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Grease a 1.5-litre loaf tin or terrine mould with butter. Lightly stretch the reserved bacon rashers (Step 2) and use most of them to line the tin or mould, overlapping slightly and leaving plenty of overhang at the top (Step 3). Pack the meat mixture into the tin (Step 4), then fold over the bacon overhang and lay the reserved rashers on top.

5 Cover the terrine with baking parchment, then

cover tightly with foil. Put a folded tea towel in a roasting tin and set the terrine on top (Step 5). Pour enough hot water into the roasting tin to come just below the rim of the terrine tin.

6 Put in the oven, then reduce heat to 160C/140C fan and bake for 1½ hrs. Take from the oven and leave to cool for 1 hr in the water bath, then remove and leave to cool completely.

7 Once cool, cut a strip of foil or card to fit the top of the tin, put it on top of the terrine and weigh it down with a few heavy cans (Step 6). Chill overnight.

8 Carefully remove the terrine from the tin, wipe off all the jelly and serve in slices with the toasts and cornichons.

PER SLICE 329 kcals, protein 33g, carbs 1g, fat 20g, sat fat 6g, fibre none, sugar 1g, salt 1.5g **GF**



TIP Terrines made with wine benefit from marinating overnight. This will develop the flavour of the terrine and tenderise it at the same time. This terrine will keep in the fridge for several days, or you can freeze it for up to two months.

Seasonal flavours

At specialty Italian restaurant Prego's in Media Rotana Hotel, the focus is firmly on seasonality, with white asparagus being the star of the show this month.



Prego's offers authentic, unpretentious Italian food, including homemade pastas, thin-crust pizzas, meat and seafood in a cosy, convivial environment of exposed brick, mahogany accents and an open kitchen. The restaurant, which received a Quality approval certificate from the Italian Chamber of commerce in 2012, also features an authentic wood fired oven, wine bar and an outdoor terrace, making for a truly Italian experience. Each month, Prego's offers special promotions

featuring traditional Italian ingredients that are in season, from truffles to asparagus. This April, the menu features the delicacy white asparagus, which is essentially green asparagus kept covered with soil to protect the ripening spears from sunlight – giving it a unique, delicate flavour. Mauro Cereda, executive sous chef of Prego's shares two simple recipes using white asparagus, as well as one of his signature risotto recipes that you can recreate at home.



Poached egg on risotto rice cake with white asparagus

SERVES 4

40g butter
80ml olive oil
120g sundried tomatoes
24g onions
200g grana padano cheese
320g carnaroli rice
350g white asparagus
400ml chicken stock
8g parsley
salt and pepper, to taste
8g chives, chopped
4 eggs
15g caviar (optional)
8g basil

METHOD

1 Heat butter and half the olive oil in a deep saucepan, and cook the sundried tomatoes and onions for 2 mins. Add the risotto rice and toast in the pan for around 1 min. Next, add the chicken stock and let it cook for 15 mins, stirring continuously, until the rice is al dente. Add the Grana Padano cheese and parsley. Keep stirring till the risotto is cooked, and reaches a smooth, creamy consistency.

2 Put the risotto into a ring until it is full, and make a risotto cake.

3 Cook the asparagus in boiling water for 6-8 mins, then drain and drizzle the remaining olive oil, salt and pepper over it.

4 Poach the eggs.

5 To serve, place the poached egg over the risotto cake. Add the cooked sundried tomatoes, chives, basil and caviar, if using.



Baked veal chop with white asparagus gratin

SERVES 4

400g white asparagus
4 veal chops (around 200g each)
600g mashed potatoes
120ml olive oil
4 eggs, poached
4g nutmeg powder
20g veal bacon
40g grana padano cheese, grated
8g parsley
4 tsp salt
4 tsp pepper

METHOD

1 Chop the veal bacon, parsley, cheese and poached egg and mix together. Pipe into small circles on a baking tray and bake for 10 mins to make duchess potatoes.

2 Boil the white asparagus in water for 6-8 mins. Drizzle over half the olive oil, season with salt and pepper, then sprinkle the grated cheese over it. Grill in the oven for 2-3 mins, until gratinated.

3 Season the veal chops with the remaining olive oil, salt and pepper, and sear on a hot pan for 20 secs each side. Then, bake in the oven for as long as is required for your preferred doneness (6 mins for rare; 8-10 mins for medium; 14 mins for well done).

4 To serve, place the asparagus on top of the veal chop, and the potatoes on the side.



Risotto with porcini mushrooms and truffle oil

SERVES 4

850g carnaroli rice (can be swapped for arborio rice)
240g porcini mushrooms
24g onions
80ml olive oil
200g butter
8g fresh thyme
800ml chicken stock
750g grana padano cheese (can be swapped for blue cheese or mascarpone cheese)
8g fresh parsley
4 tsp truffle oil
8 pieces white asparagus, to garnish

METHOD

1 Cook the mushrooms with the chopped onions, olive oil and butter in a deep saucepan.

2 Add the uncooked risotto rice and toss in the pan for around 1 min. Add the chicken stock and let it simmer for 15 minutes, stirring continuously, until the rice is al dente. Then, add the Grana Padano cheese, butter, parsley and truffle oil, and continue to stir until the consistency of the risotto is smooth and creamy.

3 Spoon the risotto into the cheese basket, garnish with boiled white asparagus to give it a seasonal twist, and serve hot.

Serve in style

MAKE A PARMESAN CHEESE BASKET TO SERVE

THIS RISOTTO IN:

Step-by-step guide

Finely grate 400g parmesan cheese. Sprinkle on a non-stick pan and let it melt for about 2 mins. Flip over and cook for another 20 secs, then transfer the cheese disc on a large glass or any other mould. Remove after it hardens (approx. 1 min) into a basket.



Let's eat outdoors

Whether you're heading to the beach, having a picnic with the kids or simply lingering over lunch in the garden, there's nothing quite like eating in the open air. Recipes SARA BUENFELD

Photographs MYLES NEW

Marinated feta in
thyme & chilli oil

Roasted pepper salad
with capers & pine nuts

Minty bean & courgette
dip with pita crisps

Marinated feta in thyme & chilli oil

SERVES 6-8 • PREP 10 MINS PLUS

MARINATING • NO COOK Easy V PF

Pack some crusty bread to serve with this.

100ml olive oil

2 tbsp fresh thyme leaves, plus a
few extra for scattering

4 garlic cloves, sliced

¼ tsp dried chilli flakes

140g semi-dried tomatoes
in olive oil, drained

175g pack or jar artichoke hearts
in oil

400g feta

85g Kalamata olives

1 Tip the olive oil and thyme into a bowl and blitz with a hand blender. Stir in the garlic, chilli and lots of black pepper (but no salt). You could add some of the oil from the tomatoes and artichokes, too.

2 Cut each block of feta into 4 (or 6) and arrange in a dish or a food container with the tomatoes, artichokes and olives. Spoon over the herby oil, scatter with extra thyme and leave to marinate in the fridge overnight.

PER SERVING (8) 366 kcals, protein 9g, carbs 3g, fat 35g, sat fat 10g, fibre 2g, sugar 1g, salt 3.2g

Minty bean & courgette dip with pita crisps

SERVES 4 • PREP 20 MINS •

COOK 15 MINS Easy V PF 1 of 5-a-day

CRISPS ONLY

Dips are great to put out at the beginning of a picnic, and this is a good alternative to hummous. Serve with vegetable sticks or these pita crisps.

2 tbsp olive oil

1 courgette, finely diced

2 garlic cloves, chopped

400g can cannellini beans, drained

Juice of ½ lemon

170g 2% Greek yoghurt

2 tbsp chopped mint

FOR THE PITA CRISPS

8 pita breads

2 tbsp olive oil

Flaky salt

1 To make the pita crisps, heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Brush both sides of the pitta breads with oil, then tear into pieces. Spread on a large baking tray and sprinkle with the flaky salt. Bake for 8 mins until starting to toast. They will get crisper as they cool.

2 To make the dip, heat the oil in a pan. Fry the courgettes and garlic with seasoning until the courgettes are tender. Set aside a couple of tablespoons of the courgettes and tip the rest into a bowl with the beans, lemon juice, yogurt and mint. Whizz until smooth with a hand blender, then spoon into a bowl or food container and top with the remaining courgettes.

PER SERVING 352 kcals, protein 12g, carbs 45g, fat 13g, sat fat 3g, fibre 3g, sugar 7g, salt 1.6g

Roasted pepper salad with capers & pine nuts

SERVES 4-6 • PREP 10 MINS •

COOK 10-15 MINS **Easy** **V** **Good for you**

2 of 5-a-day **Vit C**

3 red and 3 yellow peppers
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus
extra for grilling

1 large garlic clove

1 tbsp white wine vinegar

2 tbsp pine nuts, toasted

1-2 tbsp capers

Few basil leaves, shredded (optional)

1 Turn on the grill and line a baking tray with foil. Arrange the peppers, skin-side up, on the baking tray and brush with oil. Grill for 10-15 mins, turning, until skins are well charred. Put the peppers in a plastic bag and seal for 5 mins to loosen the skins.
2 Meanwhile, crush the garlic and a generous pinch of salt to a paste using a pestle and mortar. Add the vinegar and oil, and blend to make a dressing. Strip the skins and seeds from the peppers, then quarter. Put the flesh in a bowl or food container. Pour over the dressing and scatter with the pine nuts, capers and basil, if using.

PER SERVING (4) 209 kcals, protein 4g, carbs 14g, fat 15g, sat fat 2g, fibre 5g, sugar 13g, salt 0.2g

MAKE AHEAD

This is the sort of sandwich that you can make the night before, as you actually want all the juices to soak into the bread.

Niçoise stuffed baguette

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 10 MINS **Easy** **V**

3 large eggs

130g can tuna in olive oil, oil reserved

1 large flute or baguette measuring approx 54cm

2 tbsp mayonnaise

3 tomatoes, ends trimmed, thickly sliced

12-24 basil leaves (depending on how herby you like it)

12 pitted Kalamata olives

8 anchovy fillets

FOR THE SHALLOT VINAIGRETTE

1 shallot, finely chopped

3 tbsp olive oil

1 tbsp white wine vinegar

½ tsp Dijon mustard

1 Bring a small pan of water to the boil. Add the eggs and boil for 10 mins. Drain, then run the eggs under the

cold tap to cool quickly. Carefully shell and cut the eggs into wedge-shaped quarters. Meanwhile, mix all the ingredients for the shallot vinaigrette with seasoning and stir in the oil from the tuna.

2 Slice the loaf in half lengthways, but not all the way through, so it opens up like a book. Use your fingers to pull out any bread that easily comes away from the top half to hollow the loaf a little.

3 On the bottom half of the loaf, drizzle over the vinaigrette. Stir the mayonnaise into the tuna and spread on top. Now layer in the tomatoes, basil, olives, eggs and anchovies.

4 Tightly roll up in baking parchment and secure down the length with elastic bands or string. Press really well all the way down the loaf, then chill overnight. Cut into slices if feeding a crowd, or into 4 lengths.

PER SERVING 501 kcals, protein 21g, carbs 36g, fat 30g, sat fat 5g, fibre 3g, sugar 6g, salt 2.4g >>



The sandwich was invented 250 years ago. We think you'll enjoy this one for many years to come!

Try our
**cover
recipe!**

Blackberries, whether fresh or frozen (they freeze well), add a real hit of flavour and juiciness.

- Sarah Buenfeld

Mini blackberry Bakewells

MAKES 12 • PREP 15 MINS • COOK


15-20 MINS **Easy** 

375g pack shortcrust pastry
1 tbsp plain flour, plus extra
for dusting
100g butter, at room temperature
100g caster sugar
1 large egg
100g ground almonds
150g punnet blackberries
25g toasted flaked almonds
Clotted cream, to serve (optional)

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface and stamp out 12 circles with an 8-9cm cutter. Use to line the holes of a bun tin, and chill.

2 To make the filling, beat together the butter, caster sugar, egg, ground almonds and flour. Divide the filling between the tarts, pushing in the blackberries as you go. Scatter over the flaked almonds and bake for 15-20 mins until lightly golden.

3 Remove from the tins and serve warm or cool, with a dollop of clotted cream if you're feeling indulgent.

PER TART 315 kcals, protein 5g, carbs 24g, fat 22g, sat fat 8g, fibre 1g, sugar 10g, salt 0.5g 



Das ist *Fantastisch*.



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No gluten? No problem

You don't have to deprive yourself of your favourite treats, just because you're gluten-free. Try these recipes, and with the lovely textures, you won't even notice a difference!

WHAT IS GLUTEN?

Gluten is a protein found in grains like wheat, rye and barley. Some people, including those with coeliac disease, react badly to gluten, with even small amounts causing irritation and damage to the gut. Oats may occasionally be a problem because they contain a similar protein and are often processed in the same mills, which results in cross-contamination. People with gluten intolerance have a higher reaction threshold than those with an allergy.

It can be tricky to avoid gluten as it's found in many everyday items, including most bread, pasta, breakfast cereals, flour, pizza bases, cakes, biscuits, ready-made soups, sauces, ready meals and processed foods such as sausages. Powdered ingredients, including baking powder and mustard powder, may contain gluten, so check labels carefully and use gluten-free versions in recipes.

WHEAT-FREE, GLUTEN-FREE – WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Wheat-free doesn't necessarily mean gluten-free because products may contain other gluten grains. Similarly, some gluten-free products, like flour, are not necessarily wheat-free because they may contain other wheat proteins or wheat starch. The most common ingredients to be wary of are those that are wheat-derived, which include couscous and semolina. Other ingredients that contain gluten include barley, malt, malt extracts, rye, triticale, spelt, soy sauce and some types of miso.

WHAT TO CHOOSE INSTEAD

Avoid gluten by opting for potatoes, rice, corn, buckwheat, millet, tapioca and sago. For baking, use gluten-free products and ingredients that add the right texture such as ground nuts, grated veg and mashed potato.



Lemon & orange cake

CUTS INTO 10 SLICES • PREP 30 MINS •
COOK 45 MINS **Easy**

250g pack butter, softened
250g golden caster sugar
4 eggs
250g gluten-free self-raising flour
2 tsp gluten-free baking powder
250g mashed potatoes, forked through so it doesn't go in as one lump
2 lemons, zest and juice
1 orange, zest and juice
TO DECORATE
175g icing sugar
Squeeze lemon juice (save a little from the cake quantity)
Chocolate eggs, to decorate, if you like (check they're gluten-free)

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Grease and line a deep, 20cm round cake tin. Beat the butter and sugar together until pale and fluffy, then gradually beat in the eggs, one by one. Fold in the flour, baking powder, mashed potato, zests and juices. Scrape into the tin and level the top. Bake for 45 mins until golden and a skewer poked in comes out clean. Cool in the tin for 10 mins, then move to a wire rack.

2 Sift the icing sugar, then mix in enough of the lemon juice to make a stiff, but still runny icing. Spread over the cake so it dribbles down the sides a little. Add some chocolate eggs, if using. Leave until the icing has set, then slice and serve. Delicious with a dollop of natural yoghurt.

PER SLICE 497 kcals, protein 5g, carbs 71g, fat 24g, sat fat 14g, fibre 1g, sugar 45g, salt 0.68g



Malted walnut seed loaf

CUTS INTO 12 THICK SLICES ● PREP 25 MINS
PLUS RISING ● COOK 30 MINS **Easy** **V** **GF**

Good for you

100g cornflour
300g gluten-free brown bread flour
2 tbsp soya flour
85g potato starch
2 tsp xanthan gum
7g easy-bake dried yeast
1 tbsp caster sugar
450ml milk, warmed to hand temperature
2 tbsp sunflower oil, plus extra
for greasing
1 tbsp white wine vinegar
100g mixed seeds (such as linseeds, hemp
seeds, pumpkin seeds and sesame seeds)
50g walnuts, roughly chopped

1 Mix the flours, potato starch, xanthan gum, yeast, sugar and ½ tsp salt in a large bowl. Mix together the milk, oil and vinegar in a separate bowl, then add to the dry ingredients and mix until a soft dough comes together. Cover loosely with oiled cling film and leave to rise in a warm place for 1 hr.

2 Knead in most of the seeds and walnuts. Shape into a large round – oiled hands will help. Roll the round in the remaining seeds and nuts, then lift onto a baking tray. Loosely cover again with oiled cling film and leave for 1 hr more.

3 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan. Bake the bread for 15 mins, then reduce oven to 190C/170C fan and continue baking for 30 mins until the loaf sounds hollow when tapped on the base. Leave on a wire rack to cool, wrapped in a clean tea towel – this will help to keep the loaf soft.

Per SLICE 273 kcals, protein 7g, carbs 38g, fat 10g, sat fat 2g, fibre 3g, sugar 4g, salt 0.7g



Self-saucing chocolate pudding

SERVES 8 ● PREP 20 MINS ● COOK 30 MINS

Easy

100g butter, melted, plus a little extra for greasing

200g gluten-free plain flour

50g buckwheat flour

140g golden caster sugar

50g cocoa

1 tbsp gluten-free baking powder

2 tsp xanthan gum

4 tbsp milky coffee, made in a mug
as if you're going to drink it

3 large eggs

150ml milk

100g milk chocolate, broken
into chunks

Vanilla ice cream or single cream,
to serve

FOR THE SAUCE

200g light muscovado sugar

25g cocoa

1 Grease a 2-litre baking dish and heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Boil water in a kettle. Put the flours, caster sugar, cocoa, baking powder, xanthan gum and a pinch of salt in a large mixing bowl. Whisk together the coffee, eggs, melted butter and milk, then pour onto the dry ingredients and mix together until smooth. Stir in the chocolate chunks and scrape everything into the baking dish.

2 Mix 300ml boiling water from the kettle with the sugar and cocoa for the sauce, then pour this all over the pudding batter – don't worry if it looks unmixed at this stage! Bake on the middle shelf of the oven for 30 mins until the surface looks firm, risen and crisp. As you scoop spoonfuls into serving bowls, you should find a glossy, rich chocolate sauce underneath the sponge. Eat the cake immediately with vanilla ice cream or single cream.

PER SERVING 511 kcals, protein 8g, carbs 76g, fat 20g, sat fat 11g, fibre 3g, sugar 50g, salt 1.1g >>



Fruit-filled clementine cake

SERVES 8-10 • PREP 30 MINS PLUS

CHILLING • COOK 2 HRS 10 MINS **A little effort** 🍷

4 small clementines

200g unsalted butter, softened, plus extra for greasing

140g raisins

85g sultanas

50g currants

100g glacé cherries, quartered

2 tbsp brandy

200g soft dark brown sugar

3 eggs, beaten

½ tsp ground cinnamon

1 tsp mixed spice

pinch ground cloves

140g ground almonds

100g polenta

1 tsp gluten-free baking powder

icing sugar, to decorate (most are gluten-free, but check the packaging)

FOR THE TOPPING

4 clementines

140g caster sugar

1 To make the cake, place the clementines in a small pan, cover with water and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for 1 hr or until tender. Drain and cool.

2 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Butter a 20cm springform cake tin and line the base with a disc of buttered baking parchment. Cut the cooked clementines in half and remove any pips. Place in the bowl of a food processor and pulse until finely chopped but not puréed.

3 Combine the raisins, sultanas, currants, cherries and brandy in a bowl. Add the clementine pulp and mix well. Cream the butter and sugar together until pale. Add the beaten eggs, a little at a time, mixing well between each addition. In another bowl, combine the spices, ground almonds, polenta and baking powder. Fold into the creamed mixture along with the dried fruit and clementine pulp.

4 Spoon into the prepared tin and smooth the top. Bake on the middle shelf of the oven for 30 mins. Reduce the oven temperature to 160C/140C fan and continue to cook for a

further 40 mins. You may need to loosely cover the top of the cake with a sheet of baking parchment for the final 20 mins to prevent it browning too quickly. Cool in the tin for 30 mins before turning out onto a cooling rack.

5 To make the topping, slice the clementines to a 5mm thickness. Tip the sugar into a saucepan with 140ml water and cook over a low heat, stirring often, until the sugar has dissolved. Put the clementine slices in the pan and stir through. To keep the clementines submerged in the syrup, cut out a circle of greaseproof paper to fit into the pan and place over the fruit. Cook over a low heat for 1 hr until glossy and translucent. Remove and spread out over greaseproof paper to cool.

6 To serve, dust the whole cake with icing sugar, then arrange the clementine slices, overlapping, over the top of the cake.

PER SERVING (8) 695 kcalories, protein 9g, carbohydrate 93g, fat 34g, saturated fat 15g, fibre 3g, sugar 83g, salt 0.36g **GF**



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The London Dairy dessert series

#4 Tiramisu with a twist

Clive Micallef, chef de cuisine at Barasti, Le Méridien Mina Seyahi Beach Resort and Marina, gives this popular Italian dessert a fruity makeover with cherries, so it pairs perfectly with mocha almond fudge ice cream.



Black cherry Tiramisu

SERVES 4

5 egg yolks
100g sugar
1 vanilla pod, split, seeds scraped out
350g mascarpone
150g goat's curd (available at specialty stores)
250ml espresso coffee
24 lady sponge fingers
225g canned black cherries, slightly drained
Cocoa powder, to dust
50g fresh cherries
Red currants, to serve

1 Place the eggs yolks, sugar and vanilla seeds into a bowl and whisk together until pale and light. Add the mascarpone and whisk to combine well.

2 Place the coffee in a clean bowl. Dip a sponge finger into the coffee and press into the bottom of a tumbler or sundae glass. Repeat this process, using four sponge fingers in total for each glass, to line the bottom of the glass.

3 Spoon some black cherries into the glass over the sponge fingers. Add a layer of the mascarpone mixture to cover the cherries. Repeat with a layer of black cherries and a layer of mascarpone mixture to fill the glass.

4 To serve, smooth over the top of each tiramisu and dust with cocoa powder. Garnish with fresh cherries and red currants, and add a scoop of the mocha almond fudge ice cream on top.

Next month,
look out for the recipe with
Cookies & Cream ice cream

MEET THE CHEF



Maltese chef Clive Micallef has had over 15 years of culinary experience, having worked in five star hotel groups such as Hilton and Intercontinental in Malta as well as in catering, in Libya. He joined Le Méridien Mina Seyahi Beach Resort and Marina in 2011 and is now the chef de cuisine at Barasti and Horizon restaurants.

CHEF'S TIP:

"Make sure the eggs and sugar are whisked until pale and light, otherwise the cream will fall flat."

Two other ways to enjoy London Dairy's Mocha Almond Fudge ice cream:



Serve two scoops with a banana split sundae.



Sprinkle crushed coloured chocolate candy over the ice cream to add a crunchy texture.

To see a step-by-step video on making this dish, log on to Facebook.com/bbcgoodfoodme or Facebook.com/LondonDairy



Le Meridien Mina Seyahi



MOCHA ALMOND FUDGE ICE CREAM

Mocha flavoured ice cream with swirls of sweet fudge and crushed almonds.



WIN!
Cooking classes at
Balance café cooking
school, worth over
Dhs7,000

7 lucky winners can hone their cooking skills at interactive cooking sessions.


If you've ever wanted to learn to master the art of cooking everything from Japanese to Thai, then Balance café's cooking school is a must-visit. Each of the winners will win a package of four cooking sessions, worth Dhs1,000, in which they will get to don an apron and man a fully equipped state-of-the-art workstation, to learn how to cook delicious, aromatic dishes, from award-winning chefs.

Balance café, located at Oasis Centre on Sheikh Zayed Road, offers freshly-cooked food prepared using macrobiotic techniques combined with the ancient science of Ayurveda in a cosy environment, as well as cookery classes in their purpose-built cooking school. They also offer home-delivered healthy meal plans.



Log on to bbcgoodfoodme.com to enter this competition and simply answer this question:

Where is Balance café located?

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Gourmet Lifestyle

Travel, global cuisines, health, interviews, kitchens and more



IN THIS SECTION

* Learn about the nutritional benefits of eggs, **P64** * Ireland's culinary darling Rachel Allen shares her cooking secrets, **P67** * French cuisine demystified, **P72** * Weekend getaways with a gastro-twist, **P80**

An egg-cellent ingredient!

Easy to cook with, good for you and versatile, eggs can be eaten for breakfast, lunch or dinner.

Despite decades of bad press, eggs seem to be making a comeback of sorts. Nearly half of us still think we should eat no more than three or four eggs a week because of their cholesterol content. Now, the latest research confirms what some scientists have been saying for years – the cholesterol in our diet does not necessarily translate into a higher blood cholesterol level.

WHY ARE EGGS GOOD FOR YOU?

Although eggs do contain cholesterol, they're also a healthy source of protein, vitamins and minerals and, most interestingly, unsaturated fats – ten times as much monounsaturated fat as cholesterol. It also contains vital nutrients such as vitamins A, and B12, as well as iron and selenium. "Eggs have the highest quality protein you can buy. They have just the right mix of essential amino acids, needed by the human body, to build tissues. In addition, eggs have thirteen essential vitamins and minerals," says Carole Holditch, nutritionist and founder of Good Habits, a lifestyle programme and support network. Some cholesterol is essential, for a healthy brain and to create stress hormones. Egg yolk is the richest known source of choline, which helps to prevent cholesterol from clogging blood vessels; it also makes up cell membranes and produces acetylcholine, an important brain memory molecule. "The yolk is a major source of the egg's vitamins and minerals, and one of the few foods that naturally contain vitamin D," says Carole.

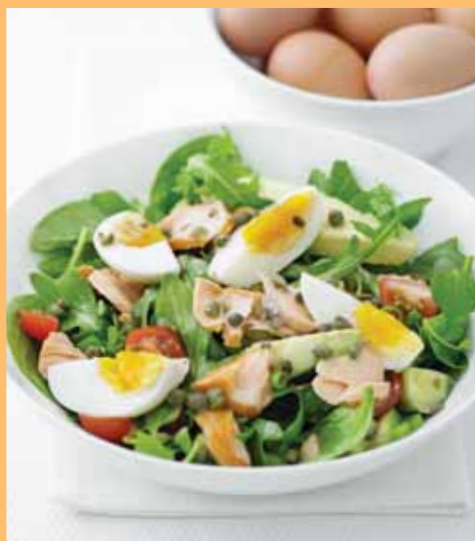
HOW MANY SHOULD YOU EAT?

There is no officially specified limit on the number of eggs, merely that they should be part of a varied diet. So the equivalent of one a day is fine. For optimising cardiovascular health, the problem is not consuming dietary cholesterol per se, but cholesterol damaged or oxidised by high temperatures such as frying, and eating saturated fats (mainly found in meat and dairy products). So a boiled or poached egg is good; and for heart health, keep fried or buttery scrambled eggs restricted to an occasional treat.

EGGS MAKE A MEAL

Containing only 75 calories and five grams of fat per large egg, this food has a low energy density, which uses up fewer calories per gram, and keeps you full long after you have eaten. The original fast food in their natural, neat package, goes down well at all meals: with wholewheat soldiers for the kids' supper, in a colourful frittata for a packed lunch, or a nutrient-rich salad.

DID YOU KNOW? The color of an egg yolk is determined by a hen's diet. If the plant pigments in the grains fed to a hen are more yellow or orange in colour, the colour of the yolk will also be more vibrant and bright in colour.



Hot-smoked salmon and egg salad

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 7-8 MINS **Easy**

4 eggs

220g spinach, watercress and rocket, or baby spinach, washed

12 cherry tomatoes, quartered

½ cucumber, cubed

1 ripe avocado, sliced

4 spring onions, finely sliced

250g hot-smoked salmon fillets

FOR THE VINAIGRETTE

3 tbsp olive oil

1 tbsp lemon juice

1 tsp Dijon mustard

1 tbsp capers, roughly chopped

1 First, hard-boil the eggs. Put them into boiling water and simmer for 7 mins, if you like a slightly runny yolk, or 8 mins for a set yolk. Allow to cool, then peel and quarter.

2 Divide the greens equally between 4 plates with the tomatoes, cucumber, avocado and spring onions. Place an egg on top of each salad and flake over some of the hot-smoked salmon.

3 For the vinaigrette, whisk the ingredients together, adding some freshly ground black pepper, then mix in 1 tbsp water and spoon a little over each dish. Serve with warm soda bread or wholegrain rolls.

PER SERVING 354 kcals, protein 25g, carbs 4g, fat 27g, sat fat 5g, fibre 3g, sugar 3g, salt 2.33g



Spinach and courgette frittata

SERVES 4 • PREP 15 MINS • COOK 20 MINS

Easy **V** **Low cal** **Good for you** **2 of 5-a-day** **Folate**

1 onion, sliced

1 tbsp olive oil

1 tsp dried chilli flakes

350g courgettes, sliced

200g bag of spinach

125g ricotta

6 medium eggs

1 In a large ovenproof frying pan, fry the onions in olive oil, until soft. Add the chilli flakes and courgettes and cook for 5 mins more.

2 Tip the bag of spinach into the large colander and pour over a kettle of boiling water. Cool under cold running water, then squeeze dry. Scatter spinach into the pan, then dot over the ricotta.

3 Heat the grill to high. Beat eggs with seasoning, pour into the pan and cook until almost completely set.

4 Finish under the grill for 3 mins or until golden and cooked through.

PER SERVING 211 kcals, protein 15g, carbs 6g, fat 15g, sat fat 5g, fibre 3g, sugar 5g, salt 0.5g



Prawn & broccoli Asian omelette

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 12 MINS

Easy **V**

8 eggs, beaten

Juice of 1 lemon

Sunflower oil

Large handful of small broccoli florets

400g large cooked prawns

2 red chillis, chopped

2 large garlic cloves, chopped

Oyster sauce, to serve (optional)

1 Beat eggs and lemon juice together and set aside. Heat 1 tbsp of the oil in a frying pan. Add broccoli and stir-fry for 2 mins. Add prawns, chilli and garlic and cook until the broccoli is just done. Tip everything out onto a plate and give the pan a wipe.

2 Heat a drop more oil in the pan. Pour in half the egg mix and swirl it around to make a thin omelette. Flip over to cook the other side, then lift onto a serving plate and keep warm. Quickly make another omelette. Add half the prawn mix to each, roll up and serve drizzled with some oyster sauce, if you like.

PER SERVING 386 kcals, protein 39g, carbs 1g, fat 25g, sat fat 5g, fibre 1g, sugar 1g, salt 2.21g **GF**

EGGS-TRA! There are a few other kinds of eggs that are delicious too:

- **Duck eggs:** Slightly larger than chicken eggs, they have more protein and are flavourful and rich in taste, but are also high in fat and cholesterol.

- **Quail eggs:** Usually much smaller in size compared to chicken eggs, these are more expensive. Containing only 14 calories, they are rich in vitamins and proteins.

- **Fish eggs:** Also known as roe, edible fish eggs usually come from fish such as salmon, cod, herring and sturgeon (which is known as caviar), and are a great source of Omega-3 fatty acids.

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Celeb chef by day, mum by night!

Rachel Allen speaks to Nicola Monteath about how she balances life as a celebrity chef, author, and mother. Photographs ANAS CHERUR

Rachel Allen is in equal measures bubbly, humble, calm and motherly, and filled with vitality. The Irish TV chef and author of over nine cookbooks, grew up in Dublin, Ireland, and left home at the age of 18 to head to the Ballymaloe cookery school. "I was always passionate about cooking. There were no blogs or websites, back then, to make me realise my chosen path. So I thought, why not just go and try out a cooking course. I initially wanted to travel and then do shoe designing – I love shoes!" she says, and I, a fellow shoe-lover, immediately warm up to her.

As soon as Rachel set foot in that cookery school in 1990, she found a mentor, in the founder of the cooking schools Myrtle Allen. "She is now my mother-in-law, and it's hilarious, because she herself came to the cooking school years ago, and ended up marrying the son of the first founder," reveals Rachel. She got married eight years later; she has three children, 13-year old Josh, ten-year old Lucca, and four-year old Scarlett.

Rachel, the celebrity chef

Rachel started her career as a chef at the same cookery school, before going to Canada where she worked in catering for a while. She returned to her home-ground Ballymaloe in just a few months, to teach there. "Canada was a great experience. It made me appreciate the food I ate, as it was all

about the produce. I would go out and pick vegetables and cook with it, which I loved doing," she says. "But Ireland is home."

Rachel never envisioned a career as a TV chef. That is, until one day, she was approached by a producer who happened to attend one of her cooking classes to do a pilot for her own cookery show – Rachel's Favourite Food. "At that time, I was pregnant with my second child, so didn't really think about it that much, but I did the pilot anyway. After I delivered and a few months had passed by, I was approached again, saying they would like to go ahead with the TV show - which was great!" she says. "I was at the right place, at the right time."

Rachel's cooking is influenced by her Irish heritage in many ways. Her cooking philosophy is focused on quick, nutritious dishes with fresh ingredients, that mothers and even children can recreate at home. Irish cuisine, as Rachel tells us, is not heavy on condiments or sauces, for flavouring and seasoning, but relies on freshness of produce for flavour. "We have fertile lands, abundant rainfall and lots of dairy and fresh produce. Irish food is very rustic, and we use a lot of seafood – fished from the nearby seas in the region," she explains.

As most busy mothers would know, it can sometimes be exhausting to come home from work

and cook for the family, or even just get inspiration for nutritious and delicious meals at the end of the day. "I always suggest sitting down over the weekend to plan ahead. Involve the family as well – to know what dishes they prefer – and then draw up a grocery list and menus," she says.

Rachel's other time-saving tips include making big batches of sauces, like Bolognese, which can be used in different ways such as with pasta, lasagna and mashed potatoes. She also suggests working with good quality produce and mixing up the weekly menus with different cuisines with dishes such as Asian stir-fries, as they are packed with flavours and nutrition from different vegetables and herbs.

Rachel, the mother

As we chat about children and cooking, Rachel conveys how important it is for adults to encourage kids and get them to help out in the kitchen at a young age, even if it is just to add chocolate chips to cupcakes or make buns. "It is a fun activity, and also a great way of spending quality time with your children," she says. Rachel believes the best way to going about it is by asking them what they want to cook, taking them to the market for grocery shopping, and letting them do >>



tasks such as chopping and peeling – with child-friendly kitchen tools.

Rachel has been practicing this in her household for years. “My daughter Scarlett loves playing with dough and slicing cucumbers. She even loves washing up! Josh, on the other hand, only wants to cook with chocolate, while Lucca loves cooking steak and pasta,” she says.

It’s not just Rachel’s children that love to cook her recipes though. A majority of Rachel’s viewers and readers are children, as they love her cupcake and dessert recipes. “I get fan mail and photos of the dishes kids make – it’s just adorable,” she says. When asked if her kids watch her TV show, Rachel admits that her youngest child Scarlett is the only one that does.

With such a hectic schedule, including TV show filming, teaching at the cookery school and writing cookbooks, it may seem as though Rachel has no time to cook at home, but she enjoys nothing more than coming home and cooking for her family. “They love my roast chicken and gravy recipe and other comfort food such as the Irish potato soup and Asian broths,” she says.

It isn’t just cooking that Rachel loves though; the talented chef loves all aspects of food, especially experimenting with flavours and eating and tasting new cuisines. Some of her favourites are Arabian mezze, and Rachel loves making moutabel, hummous and saj bread. On her recent trip to Dubai, Rachel tried a manakeesh, pomegranate with chicken liver and fattoush, which she absolutely loved. “I’m a big fan of sumac, and I make fattoush at home too,” she says. When asked what she’s taking back from here, she says “Lots of fresh dates and date syrup,” an ingredient she is keen on working with, back home.

Other than cooking with dates, Rachel is currently working on her new cookbook. “I like to take life as it comes, and believe that work and life balance is key, as it is always intertwined,” she says, as her parting message.

RACHEL RECOMMENDS

Here are Rachel’s favourites from her bestselling cookbooks:

- **Easy meals (Collins)** Great for quick, fuss-free dishes.
- **Home cooking (Collins)** For the chocolate fudge recipe – a family favourite.
- **Rachel’s food (Gill & Macmillan Ltd)** For the Roast chicken with honey and lemon recipe.



SIGNATURE RECIPE

Irish coffee cups

SERVES 4 🍷

125g butter, softened
125g soft light brown sugar
2 eggs
1 tbsp coffee essence
125g plain flour
1 tsp baking powder
150ml double or whipping cream, softly whipped, to serve

FOR THE SAUCE

125g caster sugar
6 tbsp water
150ml double or whipping cream
4 tbsp Irish whiskey

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180C and butter the insides of four small ovenproof teacups or four 6cm (2 ½ in) diameter ramekins.
- 2 Cream the butter until soft in a large bowl or with an electric food mixer fitter with the paddle attachment. Add the brown sugar and beat until the mixture is light and fluffy.
- 3 Whisk the eggs with the coffee essence in a small bowl for just a few seconds until mixed, then gradually add to the creamed butter mixture, beating all the time. Sift in the flour and baking powder and fold in gently to combine. Divide the mixture among the teacups or ramekins and place these in a deep-sided ovenproof dish or roasting tin. Pour boiling water into the dish so it comes to halfway up the sides of the cups. Bake for 25-30 minutes, until the centre of each cake is

springy to the touch.

- 4 To make the sauce, combine the caster sugar and water in a saucepan and bring to a boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar as the mixture heats up. Turn the heat up to high and continue to boil, but without stirring, until the syrup becomes a deep golden caramel colour. Cook the sauce just to the point when it starts smoking. (If it’s not cooked enough you won’t get a strong enough caramel flavour, but if overcooked, it will taste slightly bitter.) You may need to swirl the pan, rather than stirring the mixture, toward the end of caramelising to ensure it cooks evenly. Turn down the heat and immediately stir in the cream and whiskey, taking care as it may bubble and spit; then set aside. You may need to whisk it for a few seconds over low heat to help the caramel dissolve into the cream and whiskey.
- 5 When the cakes are done, remove from the oven and allow to cool for a couple of minutes. Place on saucers or serving plates, or tip them out onto warm plates if you prefer. To serve, pour a tablespoon of the warm whiskey sauce over each, then top with a spoonful of softly whipped cream. **GF**

TIP Both the cakes and sauce can be made ahead of time, the sauce can be made a couple of days ahead. Reheat the sauce in a saucepan and reheat the cakes in the oven (preheated to 130C) for ten mins or just until warmed through. Serve with Irish coffee.

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MY KITCHEN



Prue has created the look of a traditional dresser, but with modern shelves and downlighters

Prue Leith

Prue Leith, caterer, cookery writer and judge on TV show *Judge, Judge, Judge*, tells Vanessa Berridge how she has given her kitchen a new lease of life.

Through her restaurant, cookery schools, catering business and various board directorships, Prue Leith, CBE, has helped to change British eating habits since the 1960s.

Having played a significant role in improving food on British trains and in schools, through the Focus on Food campaign, she has also chaired the council of the Royal Society of Arts and written 12 cookery books. Since 1995, she has concentrated on writing fiction, although this year she published her memoirs, *Relish: My Life on a Plate* (Quercus).

Prue has a son and a daughter, both in their thirties, and two grandchildren. She divides her time between Notting Hill and the Gloucestershire home she shared with her husband, Rayne Kruger, who died in 2002. She will be back to judge a new series of the BBC show, *Great British Menu*, this year.

How long have you had this kitchen?

Rayne and I bought the house in 1976 and moved here the following year. We planned the kitchen very carefully and got it more or less perfect. I

moved pieces of cardboard around on graph paper for the cooker, fridge and other appliances to work out the layout precisely. Now it's even easier to do this on a computer.

Why did you decide to redo it?

When I did a lot of work on the house a year ago, I decided to update the kitchen, too. The units had been dark cherrywood, so I changed them for these pale blue units to brighten up the room. The kitchen was finished just before Christmas, so it was chaos, as no one knew where anything was.

What other changes did you make?

When we first moved in, we installed a spit into the huge fireplace, thinking it would be lovely to roast suckling pig and spring lamb for big parties. But we only used it a few times, so I replaced it with slate shelves for my pots and pans. I moved my batterie de cuisine here from over the cooker – it used to block the view as I cooked.

Did you buy new appliances?

I no longer needed to have an Aga, as I don't test

recipes any more. Instead, I installed a Rangemaster, with an induction hob and two ovens, one of which can be used as a plate warmer. But you can also take out the central divide and turn it into a single enormous oven, using the shelves stored in the drawer beneath – that's useful at Christmas, as I have a large family. I've built in a microwave and steamer on either side, and a griddle, which I also use for jam, as the preserving pan isn't suitable for the induction hob.

Did you have any other requirements?

I prefer to have drawers, so that bowls and dishes are accessible and get used. And I'm too old to go scrabbling round looking for things in the back of cupboards!

How did you choose the work surfaces and floor?

I decided to use speckled granite for the worktops because it's so tough. But one thing I haven't quite got used to is that it doesn't show the dirt – I expect to see when the surfaces need wiping. I kept the lovely old, irregular elm flooring, but had it re-sanded.



The Lascelles clock looks curved, but is actually a photo printed on tin



Most of Prue's utensils hang above the old fireplace for ready access



A stainless-steel triple bin makes recycling easy

What about lighting?

Initially, we had awful Seventies strip lighting. Now I've put in bright, energy-saving LED lights, as there's nothing worse than working in the dark. But over the table, I have an old-fashioned tungsten lamp to add some atmosphere.

Any final thoughts?

I was lucky to commandeer the large, south-facing dining room as the kitchen to create a really nice place where my family and friends come and talk to me while I'm cooking. 🍷

PRUE'S TIPS

- Practicality should always rule over aesthetics. Don't get carried away buying things that you fancy but will never need. My spit-roast seemed so romantic, but the fact is, I never used it.
- Think about how things work. Most people wash up from left to right, so you need to have space on both sides.
- Ensure that the doors of any appliance you buy can be hung on either side. It's very annoying to have to walk around doors all the time.
- You have to think about safety. I'm used to small children, so I never have saucepan handles facing outwards on the hob – it's a habit thing.
- If you are building a kitchen from scratch, make sure that you create space for trays.

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GET THE LOOK



This Bokashi composting bin is a great way to recycle organic kitchen waste and turn it into compost soil conditioner. Dhs278, available from bokashidubai.com.



A silicone oven mitt provides protection from heat and can be cleaned in the dishwasher, Dhs79 each, from Tavola.



A retro kitchen clock works perfectly with a kitchen of this style. French clock from The One, Dhs1,295.

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Food Safari: France

Each month, we dip into the UAE's multicultural melting pot to discover a new cuisine from a foodie.

Catherine Gilbert is a cookbook author and food consultant who has been cooking since she was six! A self-confessed food lover, Catherine moved to Dubai two years ago to set up her own bilingual women's lifestyle magazine, having formerly worked as a model and marketing professional, among other things. Apart from running a business, and bringing up four children, she also finds time to conduct cooking classes, focusing on bread-making, which is something of a passion for her.

Passionate not just about bread however, but indeed all food, Catherine credits her passion to her father. "My dad loved food, and I used to love cooking and baking for him," she says. "When I was little, both my parents were working, so I would come home and make my own lunches. I started making lunch for the whole family and haven't looked back since!" she smiles.

Catherine grew up in a small town north of Paris, Vetheul, in a house with a big garden, where they grew seasonal fruit and vegetables. "Those were my best years," she reminisces. "We cooked with what was in the garden. We lived in the countryside, it was very beautiful there. This was the village where the Impressionist movement had its birth, Claude Monet used to live there."

THE COUNTRY

Catherine's idyllic childhood isn't unusual in France, where everything grows in abundance. "It is an agricultural country, we produce everything – from vegetables to meat and poultry – and it has always been this way, that is why we have such a rich gastronomy," she says.

Europe's second largest country has a varied topography, from Alpine mountains in the north to warm Mediterranean coastlines, and lush forests, rivers and volcanic valleys running through it. Capital city Paris is located in the Paris basin, a lowland bordered by cliffs and limestone ridges, which make up most of the northern part of the country. Bordered by Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and Spain, France enjoys the coastal waters of the Atlantic Ocean, English channel and the Mediterranean.

Contrary to what many might imagine, French cuisine, which has developed into one of the most respected in the world, isn't focused on any one type of flavour, and has numerous regional variations. France's diverse land and seascape contributes to a varied diet, which relied mostly on local ingredients.

THE CUISINE

"Each part of France has its own cuisine, because traditionally, we eat what is locally produced. So even if it is a distance of 1,000 kilometres, the climate changes so much – so, what you grow and eat is different," explains Catherine. "In the north, it is colder, so people eat more heavy dishes – the diet includes more pork and more fat. In the south, it is warmer, so ingredients like tomatoes and olives are popular. Fish and seafood is popular in all of France, but particularly what type of seafood, depends on the region again."

In some cases, the same dish can be made differently, in different parts of the country. "The base is the same, but it is cooked differently, depending on the region and the season," Catherine says. "For example, an omelette can be made with bacon in the north, capsicum in the south-west, and tomatoes in the south-east."

In Northern France, mussels are popular, as are other seafood (a typical dish is waterzoi, made with different types of fishes, sea food and leeks). Game, when in season, is also eaten a lot in Northern France, whether it's rabbit or wild duck with potatoes. Typical desserts would be tarts with apples or pears. But Eastern cooking – regions such as

Alsace, Lorraine – uses more pork either as a charcuterie or in dishes like choucroute (sour cabbage with different kinds of pork meat and sausages), or baeckeoffe (a baked dish of different meats, potatoes and onions).

The south west of France has a very rich cuisine with the famous foie gras, cassoulet, poultry like duck or goose which can be stuffed or prepared with forest mushrooms or truffles and great beef. This region is also well known for the fruits like peaches, apricots, plums, which are used either for sweet or savoury recipes.

In the southeast and Provençal regions, the influence of the Mediterranean Sea and its climate has led to the development of a cuisine using olive oil and olives, tomatoes, fish, honey, garlic, capsicum, onions, figs, raisins, and herbs like thyme, bay leaves, basil and rosemary. Well known dishes like pissaladière (a tart made with onions and olives); ratatouille (a side of chopped capsicums, tomatoes, onions and garlic); tian (gratin of zucchinis, tomatoes and onions with olive oil and dry herbs); daube (beef or lamb slowly cooked with vegetable and wine) all belong to this region.

Even within each region, certain towns are known for certain dishes that originate from there, whether it's Quiche Lorraine from Lorraine, or bouillabaisse from Marseille (a fish soup which was originally made by fishermen with the fish they couldn't sell!). Similarly, Brittany is famous for its oysters, and crêpes. And Burgundy is a region where great wines are produced, so iconic dishes are often cooked with wine, like boeuf bourguignon and coq au vin. It is also the land of the escargots de Bourgogne (burgundy snails, prepared with butter, garlic and parsley).

While these regional colours make up an interesting and rich culinary landscape, there are a few things that are well-loved throughout France – bread and cheese being predominant. “We share a special relationship with bread,” says Catherine.

THE CULTURE

History has played an important role in shaping France's rich culinary culture – and interestingly, it can be traced back to the Italians. At the height of the Renaissance movement in the 15th century, an Italian princess Catherine de Medici moved to France to marry the future King Henry II, and brought with her an army of skilled cooks. That was at the heart of French gastronomy, and ever since, French royalty can be credited with the growth of the cuisine. It was a status symbol to eat sumptuously, and the rulers would host lavish banquets, with the bustling royal kitchens of yore



Catherine's son Hugo, seen here at their garden in France, has inherited her love of food!

Catherine loves nothing more than baking her own fresh bread

probably being the root that modern restaurant kitchens have developed from. “We had chefs even back then, and the castle kitchens were like cooking schools where young kids would help out, and learn,” says Catherine.

The French revolution helped spread the culture of good food to the masses, and in the 20th century, leading chefs like Montagné and Escoffier created a record of French food, which has been instrumental in cementing France's position as the cradle of a structured system of gastronomy. In the 1950s, a new trend called nouvelle cuisine emerged, which revolved around simplified flavours with lighter sauces, visual artistry, and smaller portions. Modern French cuisine is a constantly evolving blend of all the different historical influences.

A love for food seems to be one of the greatest legacies the historic French royals could have left behind for their people. “Maybe what makes the

French way of life is the fact that meals are time for sharing. Eating is not only a question of satisfying hunger, it's also a pleasure,” says Catherine.

“Traditionally Sunday lunch was the moment for family, even children, to gather around the table. The meal could start at 12 am and finish at 4 pm.”

Even though people find less and less time to share such family meals together, and traditions are also changing with the times, special occasions like Christmas and Easter are always an excuse for people to get together over a celebratory meal. “Christmas Turkey, Easter leg of lamb or mardi-gras crêpes are dishes which are still prepared for these special occasions,” she says. “We always do a family dinner at home before I leave for Dubai, and especially during festivals, we never miss out on sharing good food. My children love food too, and we like to cook together. I think it's in their genes!”

We got her to share two traditional French recipes from different regions, that she has given her own little twists to. >>



Poulet Basquaise

SERVES 6 ● PREP 15 MIN ● COOK 40 MIN

1.5 kg chicken pieces
3 tbsp flour
2 tbsp olive oil
1 big onion, sliced
2 red bell peppers, cored, seeded and sliced
2 green bell peppers, cored, seeded and sliced
2 garlic cloves, minced
5 tomatoes, diced
1 teaspoon dried thyme
2 bay leaves
Salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste


1 Dust the chicken pieces in the flour. Heat the oil in a large casserole fry the chicken pieces until golden brown. Remove and set aside.
2 In the same casserole, add the onions, peppers, and cook, stirring frequently, for 5 mins, until softened and golden. Stir in the garlic and fry for another 3 mins. Add the tomatoes, thyme, bay leaves and the pieces of chicken. Season to taste. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to simmer, cover the casserole and cook for 40 mins.
3 Serve with steamed potatoes, or even with rice or pasta.



Tarte Tatin

SERVES 6 ● PREP 10 MIN ● COOK 50 MIN

150g granulated sugar
50g butter, cut into small cubes
6 apples
230g puff pastry roll
Fresh cream or vanilla ice cream, to serve

1 Pre-heat the oven to 200C.
2 In a pan, sprinkle the sugar and cook without stirring until it caramelises. Add the butter and stir gently to avoid splashing caramel out of the pan. Pour the caramel into a tart dish.
3 Peel the apples and cut into slices. Arrange the slices on the caramel so that they are squeezed tightly together. Cover with the pastry. Tuck the edges down around the apples.
4 Bake on the lowest shelf of the oven for 40 mins, then remove the tart from the oven and let it cool for 10 mins.
5 Set the serving plate on top of the baking dish and flip over so that the apples are facing up. Serve warm with fresh cream or vanilla ice cream. 

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Jamie Oliver



A tasty time

Residents enjoyed a delightful weekend of food and fun at this year's Taste of Dubai. Photographs ANAS CHERUR

At 5pm on Thursday, March 14, barely an hour after Taste of Dubai officially opened, the Dubai Media City amphitheatre was heaving – a sign of things to come! Restaurants pulled out all stops to recreate the fine dining atmosphere in the festival, and the crowds flocked to sample their offerings.

The lineup of bands belted out hit after hit, as people relaxed in the sunshine, soaking in the food, music and atmosphere. Meanwhile, leading chefs from local restaurants as well as international celebrity chefs enthralled the crowds at the cookery classes, sharing tips, tricks and recipes. There was plenty of shopping to be done too, with the market area offering everything from gourmet foodie products, to jewellery and crafts. The kids' play area was a hit with the little ones, where they enjoyed not only the usual face painting and bouncy castles, but also a live cooking station where celebrity chefs interacted with the toddlers, carnival games and a library. Clearly, a fun time was had by all!

Not just the visitors, participants at the festival also enjoyed it thoroughly. According to James Worthington, General Manager of Rivington Bar & Grill, who are regulars at Taste of Dubai, "This is probably the most popular food event in the UAE, so we like to get our name out there. It's great for those who haven't had a chance to come by the restaurant, as they get to sample what's on offer."

New to the festival, Frevo at Fairmont The Palm, Dubai, found Taste of Dubai equally useful. "As a new restaurant on the Dubai dining scene, it's important to get visibility from the start and Taste of Dubai is the perfect vehicle for this. I really enjoy interacting with residents and visitors in the city, and introducing them to authentic Brazilian food and flavours," said chef de cuisine Fernando Lima.

Not only was the festival bigger and better this year, it was also encouraging to see the increasing local presence there – whether it's UAE farms, or home-grown foodie brands and local chefs. The growing independent foodie scene here needs exactly this sort of support – this year felt like the most 'Dubai' that Taste of Dubai has been!

VOX POPS

“This is the first time I'm coming to Taste of Dubai, and I love the aromas and atmosphere of this place. I'm really fond of Indian cuisines so can't wait to try some of the dishes at the Indian restaurants here.”

-Joseph Olivar



The festival had the crowds coming in from the get-go!



The multiple bands kept crowds entertained



The weather was perfect for a foodie weekend outdoors

VOX POPS

“I'm really enjoying a Friday afternoon like this where I can taste delicious food and listen to good music.”

-Michael Cherny

SENSORY SESSION

The new Dine in the Dark sessions hosted by Andy Campbell was one of the highlights of Taste of Dubai 2013. Guests purchased a ticket for Dhs25 to enter a pitch-dark tent, and were blindfolded the minute they were seated, to then use their sense of taste to identify the ingredients in three canapés they were about to taste. With each canapé, Andy provided hints to help them think about specific flavours and aromas related to the ingredients – which ranged from tortilla chips, masoor lentils, goat's cheese, sunflower seeds, dried cranberries and foie gras, to chocolate and raspberries. Guests were then handed a list of 100 ingredients to select 30 from, which they believed were in the canapés. Those who listed out the correct ingredients were then entered into a prize draw to win an exclusive fine dining experience with chef Andy Campbell, at home, worth Dhs5,000, which prize was taken home by Stephanie Shovcair.



Plenty of live cooking stations provided fresh, delicious food in small taster portions with prices to match

VOX POPS

“The festival has been absolutely great so far. It’s my first year, and the minute I entered, I went to try some of the restaurants, and will hopefully catch a few shows at the cookery school later!”

-Shauna Ramskil



Live entertainment added to the atmosphere



Gizzi Erskine was one of the celebrity chefs who held cooking sessions



Visitors got a chance to get hands-on at the cookery classes



Gary Rhodes interacted with guests and did book signings



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A culinary adventure

There's no better time to discover one of India's best kept secrets and most remote states, Nagaland, than now, as the Aoling spring festival celebrated by the local tribes commences. Enjoy the simple villagers' hospitality as they invite you to join in the celebrations to enjoy the exotic, ethnic food washed down with local rice beer, colourful costumes, and traditional dances and rituals at the festival, while you explore the unspoilt natural beauty of the region, and learn about the local culture with home-stays – it will be an offbeat adventure like none other. Sustainable tourism company Greener Pastures offer organised trips to the region, prices start from US\$1,100 (around Dhs4,000) for nine day packages. Log on to thegreenerpastures.com for more info.

A blessing in Switzerland

Renowned New York Japanese restaurant Megu (which means 'blessing' in Japanese) has recently opened an outpost at the luxe Alpina Gstaad hotel in Switzerland. A talented team including ex-Nobu chefs will serve up an avant-garde menu reflecting Megu's philosophy of organic dining, incorporating local specialties such as Oscietra Caviar and Belperknolle cheese, in a sophisticated setting combining design influences from both cultures. Visit www.thealpinagstaad.ch for more.



TASTE OF THE WORLD

All the foodie news from around the globe.

Discover Devon

Touted as the 'new Tuscany', Devon is emerging as an epicurean destination with its growing foodie culture and beautiful vineyards. For a quintessentially English country escape, book in at self-catering luxury cottage Hembury court, set in a tranquil rural area. Whether you want to visit quaint tea rooms in local villages, go on winery tours, or simply soak up nature, it's the perfect pre-summer getaway! Prices start from £270 (around Dhs1,500) per week, hemburycourt.co.uk.

When in Venice...

Don't miss out on a meal at PG's Club, Restaurant & Bar at the luxe, Phillipe Starck-designed PalazzinaG hotel. Located right on the Grand Canal, the exclusive restaurant – which is open only to hotel guests – offers authentic Italian in an elegant, historic setting. You can either opt for a gourmet meal watching the chef in action in the show kitchen, or you can take it a step further with joining the chef on a visit to the local market, cooking with him, and then enjoying a four-course tasting menu. Room rates start from €319 (around Dhs1,500) per night, log on to designhotels.com/gourmet_adventures for details.





Spring breaks

Head out for the weekend while you can still enjoy the outdoors. Whatever you want from your mini-break, these three fabulous getaways are all a short drive away!

If you want a: **Family break**

GO TO: Hilton Ras al Khaimah Resort & Spa

HERE'S WHY: It may be only over an hour away by road, but it feels like a world apart. The resort – not to be confused with two other Hilton city properties nearby – is set on a stretch of private sandy beach, with the rugged Hajar mountains towering over it, and evokes an instant holiday feeling as you drive in. The sprawling Arabian palace-like structure looms over the sea it overlooks, with its traditional architecture and sandstone finish, and beautifully landscaped gardens, offering a luxurious yet relaxed and unpretentious environment.

Check into one of the beach villas, which come with a separate bedroom and living room, outdoor patio or terraces, and roomy bathrooms with twin

marble vanities, to enjoy a home away from home experience for the whole family. The interiors are done up in a neutral colour scheme with splashes of turquoise to brighten it up, while latticed woodwork and traditional artefacts framed on the walls, add a hint of Arabia.

With over six pools to choose from – including a free form salt-water pool and two kids' pools – as well as of course, the gorgeous, unspoilt two kilometre-long beach and plenty of water sports and beach activities including volleyball, you will have enough of water action. For those who want to simply kick back with a book, the inviting beach loungers and occasional hammock, beckon. Or, simply take a walk around the expansive gardens – the grounds are the size of a small village almost, complete with rustic signposts and buggy

service for internal transport. If you can tear the children away from all the fun, you can head to the kids' club where they will stay entertained in the indoor playground, and enjoy activities like singing, dancing and cinema nights, while you escape into the luxe spa for some me-time.

Even though it ticks all the boxes for a family resort, with facilities and dining options to suit everyone (there are over 14 bars and restaurants), being as spread out as it is, it never feels crowded, and everyone seems to find their own little corner of peace here. That, and the friendly service, which is consistently warm and welcoming, giving you the feeling of visiting a luxurious country home, rather than a five star resort, is what makes a stay here truly memorable.



AND DON'T MISS A MEAL AT: There are plenty of options when it comes to food here, from fine dining restaurants to casual beach bars and lively clubs, with a variety of cuisines to match – from Italian and Brazilian to Asian. For a unique dining experience, head to the signature restaurant Pura Vida. Expect an authentic Brazilian experience, from the Caipirinha cocktails and cheese bread to start with, to the full-scale, centuries-old Churrasco experience – seasoned meats cooked on an open grill, which are carved from skewers at the table for guests. This isn't a three-course meal, but rather like a bottomless glass offer at fast food outlets, whereby you eat as much as you can, from the variety of cuts of chicken, beef, lamb and pork. There is a small wooden cylinder placed in front of each person, painted green on one side and red on the

other; this is meant to be used to signal to the wait staff when you're ready for your next serving. Don't forget to use it, as otherwise, the food just keeps on coming! Just when you think you couldn't possibly eat anymore, yet another succulent, cooked-to-perfection cut appears, and the friendly waiter practically begs you to try it, "because it's very good"!

Accompanied by traditional sides such as rice, mashed potatoes and corn on the cob, as well as chimichurri sauce, you won't regret the over-eating, even if it means having one less of the churros – delicate, melt-in-the-mouth fried pastry with caramel and berry sauce – for dessert, which is a must-have.

NEED TO KNOW: Room rates start from Dhs760 per night, visit hilton.com for special offers, or call 07-2288844. >>

- Sudeshna Ghosh





If you want a: **Wellness break**

GO TO: Six Senses Zighy Bay, Musandam, Oman

HERE'S WHY: Nestled between the Hajar mountains and the Indian Ocean, The Six Senses Zighy Bay resort is located on the northern Musandam Peninsula, and is the ultimate relaxation retreat located just two hours from Dubai, by road – you don't even need a visa! Make your way to the hotel by 4x4 through the rocky mountains; by paragliding into the resort; or by a speedboat that you can hop on from the Dibba port. My entrance to the resort was by a boat from the port, which offered scenic views of the inlets. I was welcomed at the resort with a refreshing date smoothie – made with dates from the on-site 2,500 square metre organic garden – and was taken to my rustic-style pool villa which was stunning, to say the least. With an outdoor infinity pool, lounge area, outdoor shower and day beds, I was spoilt for choice when it came to where best to soak in the relaxed ambiance.

With a focus on wellness, the resort offers a variety of three-, five- and seven-day spa packages, in which you get a personalised consultation to choose a programme best suited to your needs, which combine therapies with healthy cuisine. Packages include Sense of detox; Functional fitness (which includes exercise and Jungle gym activities); De-stress (a holistic programme aimed at stimulating energy flow and calm nerves); and Slow life (which focuses on treatments made from local products to revive the body and soul). Without the time to give my body a full-blown overhaul, I opted for a walk on the private beach followed by a shiatsu massage, which was very effective in its use of a combination of special techniques to target my muscle fatigue and stress.

There are plenty of other activities aimed at wellbeing on offer, from cooking classes, to herbal

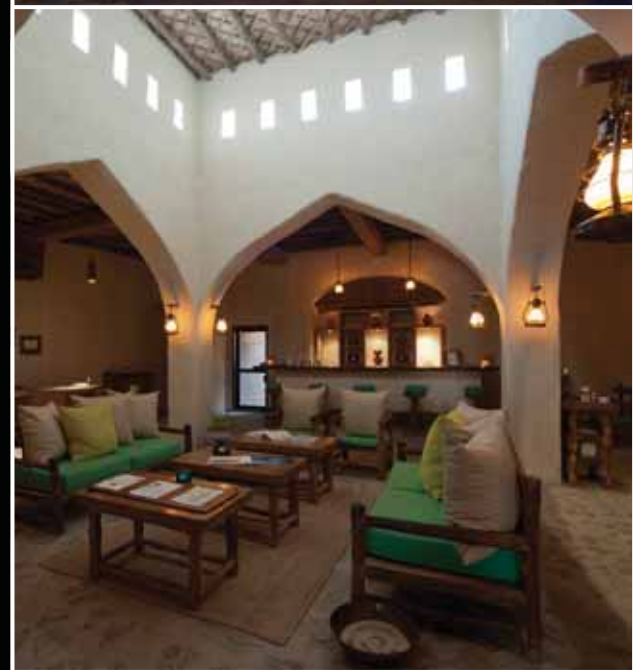
mixology sessions, where you can learn to make nutritious fruit and vegetable concoctions. I recommend the Arabic cooking class at Spice Market which teaches you how healthy the regional cuisine can be, with authentic dishes such as fattoush, falafel, and fish with salsa – they were surprisingly easy to make!

AND DON'T MISS A MEAL AT: There are several unique dining experiences to tantalise your tastebuds, but my favourite by far, was a healthy lunch at the Summer House, where I tried a three-course menu which looked as beautiful in its presentation, as it tasted delicious. Think innovative flavours like salad made with goat's cheese, beetroot, sundried tomatoes, baby carrots and asparagus; vanilla poached chicken with fresh vegetables; and chocolate and avocado mousse – a guilt-free dessert that is surprisingly delicious! – in a relaxed outdoor setting.

Other dining options include dinner at Sense on the Edge, the resort's award-winning restaurant, sited on a mountain 293 metres above sea level, which features mystical views of the mountains and the ocean, with appetising food and refreshing cocktails to match. If you're looking for a romantic dinner, head to the Wine Tower for a Destination Dining experience and take in the panoramic views of the resort and sea. For an authentic Arabian meal, check out the beachfront Shua Shack – a communal dining restaurant which offers Bedouin-style dishes such as lamb slow-cooked under the ground, accompanied by the sounds of waves lapping against the shore.

NEED TO KNOW: Prices start from Dhs3,300 per night for a Pool villa, visit sixsenses.com for more.

- Nicola Monteath





If you want a: **Culture break**

GO TO: St Regis Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi

HERE'S WHY: Abu Dhabi is fast emerging as a culture hub, with not just regular events highlighting the local and international arts, but plenty to interest culture vultures all year round. Saadiyat Island is set to become a global cultural haven when all the planned museums open, but until then, it is still an ideal place to be based in, to check out the rest the city has to offer, from visiting the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, to attending one of the many classical concerts.

At the über-luxe St Regis hotel, the legacy of the iconic New York brand has been successfully transplanted, injected with a touch of Arabian hospitality. Opulent grandeur and tasteful sophistication aren't necessarily words that go together, but in this case, they make a perfect marriage. From the Mediterranean-inspired architecture of the main hotel and outlying buildings, to the imposing marble-finished lobby with striking chandeliers, the hotel exudes understated elegance.

Whether you spend your down-time relaxing by the gorgeous pool, at the picture-perfect beach, or at the luxe spa, you will be ensconced by luxury all the way. The rooms are spacious and well-appointed, with old-school ceiling fans adding a colonial charm, and all boast views of the impossibly blue sea – even from the oversized bathrooms which feature free-standing bathtubs strategically positioned in front of floor-to-ceiling windows. A stay here comes with butler service, which not only means little touches like complimentary sweets and ice delivered to the

room in the evening, but personalised help in planning your cultural itinerary.

AND DON'T MISS A MEAL AT: Asian restaurant Sontaya, which is set on floating pavilions overlooking the ocean, and serves authentic food from around southeast Asia. Sit outdoors on the terrace to enjoy the balmy sea breeze, or take in the cheery interiors, flooded with natural light from the glass walls – either way it will provide a magical setting for the food. Whether it's an exploding-with-flavour Vietnamese spring rolls, a tender sticky chicken, or simple seafood stir-fry, you know there are experts at work – in fact, you can watch them in action from the show kitchen window!

A dining destination in its own right, the hotel offers several other gourmet options, including the *BBC Good Food ME* award-winning 55th & 5th grill and lounge, the signature restaurant, and the more relaxed Turquoiz where you can enjoy sundowners and seafood in a rustic, relaxed ambience. For me, the best measure of a hotel's culinary standards is the breakfast buffet, and the St Regis breakfast, served at the poolside Mediterranean-esque Olea restaurant, didn't fail to impress – freshness, variety, and taste, it was all there.

NEED TO KNOW: Room rates start from Dh1,075, visit stregis.com for special April packages, or call 02-4988889. 

- Sudeshna Ghosh



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Mother's Day cooking

A select group of Food Club members had the opportunity to participate in a mother-child cooking class at the School of Culinary and Finishing Arts, last month, courtesy of Kenwood. Photographs ANAS CHERUR

Food Club members gathered at the School of Culinary and Finishing Arts last month, for a hands-on mother and child cooking class, ahead of Mother's Day on March 21. Nine pairs of mums with their kids (aged between eight and 12) manned their own cooking stations which were fitted out with the Kenwood Chef Titanium appliance, to learn from and cook with Chef Francisco Araya, director of Scafa's culinary programmes. On the menu were three simple, but delicious dishes – gazpacho, pasta and a decadent dessert. Participants not only learnt the recipes, but also got their hands dirty making their own pasta. After the class, they sat down to a three-course meal at the in-house café. Three lucky winners took home snazzy Kenwood blenders from the raffle draw, while one participant walked away with a Scafa cooking class voucher.



All ready to get cooking!



Chef Francisco interacts with the participants



Chef Francisco lends a helping hand with making pasta



Kids enjoyed using the Kenwood machine



Zaigham Haque, owner of Scarf, personally served the participants



Mothers and children got to make pasta from scratch



Chef Francisco shared handy tips and tricks



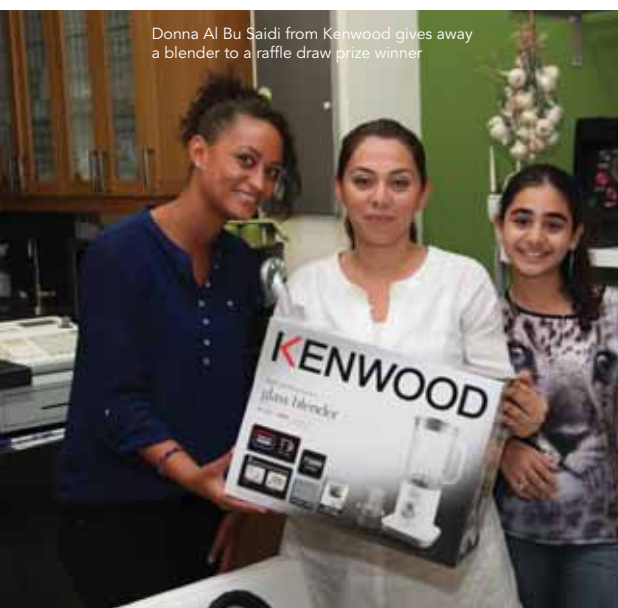
STARTER

Tomato gazpacho

SERVES 4 • PREP 10MINS • COOK 45 MINS

400g tomato
150g red onion
150g red pepper
150g yellow pepper
150g green pepper
20g garlic
30ml olive oil
5g salt
3g black pepper
100g ice cubes
Green salad, to serve

1 Cut the vegetables into bite sized pieces. Blend all the ingredients together until smooth.
2 Place in the fridge for 30 mins to cool down.
3 Remove from the fridge, add ice and blend again until smooth.
4 Pour into small glasses and sprinkle with freshly ground pepper. Serve with a green salad on the side. >>



Donna Al Bu Saidi from Kenwood gives away a blender to a raffle draw prize winner



Another lucky pair wins a Kenwood blender



Homemade tagliatelle carbonara

SERVES 4 ● PREP 25 MINS ● COOK 10 MINS

400g flour

4 eggs

FOR THE CARBONARA SAUCE

150g white onion

150g beef bacon

20g garlic

200ml cooking cream

50g parmesan cheese

4 egg yolks

30ml olive oil

Chives, for garnish

- 1 To make the pasta, using the hook attachment of the Kenwood chef titanium, knead flour and eggs for 5 mins. Wrap the dough in cling film and store in the fridge.
- 2 Chop and mix together the onions, garlic

and beef bacon. Heat up the olive oil in a large pan and sauté the mixture until all ingredients are translucent.

3 Remove the dough from the fridge. Install the pasta attachment on to the appliance and roll the pasta starting from setting 1 all the way to setting 7 – to let the dough slowly thin out.

4 Install tagliatelle attachment to the appliance and roll the pasta dough through it. Sprinkle plenty of flour on the pasta to prevent it from sticking.

5 Heat up the carbonara vegetables, adding cream and seasoning. Simmer for 5 mins – if it thickens, add a little hot water to lighten it.

6 Bring a pan three quarters full of water to the boil. Add the pasta and gently boil for approximately 2-4 mins or until al dente.

7 Remove the pasta from the water and add it to the sauce.

8 Serve in pasta bowls garnished with chives.



Torta 3 leches

SERVES 8 ● PREP 15 MINS ● COOK 35 MINS

200g flour

90g sugar

10g baking powder

5ml vanilla essence

6 eggs

FOR THE MILK MIX

100ml condensed milk

100ml evaporated milk

100ml milk

FOR THE MERINGUE

3 egg whites

200g sugar

150ml water

Fresh strawberries, to serve

1 Whisk the eggs, vanilla essence and sugar together until it triples in volume.

2 Sift the flour and baking soda into the batter and fold in with a spatula slowly.

3 Set the batter in a cake mould and bake for 25 mins at 180C.

4 Blend all the milk mix ingredients.


5 Remove the cake from the oven and make holes all over, using a skewer.

6 Pour the milk mixture over the cake and let it soak. Refrigerate overnight.

7 Whisk the egg whites to soft peaks to make the meringues.

8 Prepare syrup with the water and sugar, and when it reaches 118C – check with a thermometer – pour over the meringue by whisking continuously.

9 Cover the cake with the meringue, and burn using a torch or place in the oven until the meringue turns slightly brown.

9 Serve with strawberries on the side. 



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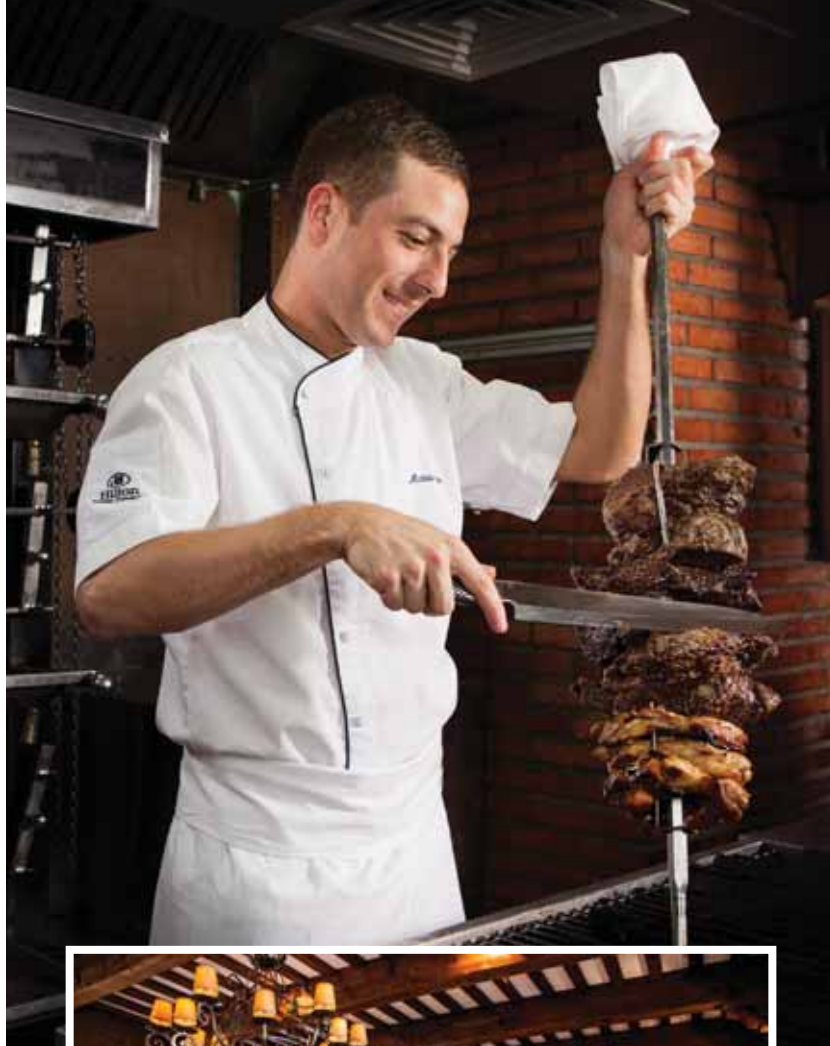
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Feedback

Nicole Mrad, who was one of the ladies on our inaugural trip to Morocco, had this to say:

“We had an amazing time on this trip! It was wonderful meeting all these new people, we had so much fun together – and all the cooking classes and the food was simply great!”



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GoodFood

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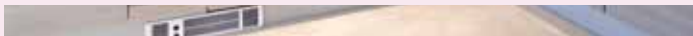
In next month's issue



BBC Good Food Middle East
is launching in Doha this May!



* Kitchens Special: Chic, functional kitchen ideas



* Superfoods you should include in your diet



* Read all about our first Culinary Journeys trip!



* Make some Mediterranean magic



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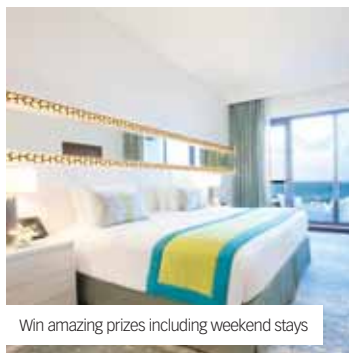
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Learn from the pros



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Win amazing prizes including weekend stays



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What they said

Feedback from our Food Club members:

● Huge compliments to the team for a stunning Masterclass event. They are presented so professionally and are a fantastic showcase for the chefs and their restaurants. ● – Paul Conroy

● Thank you for the invitation to the Masterclass. We really enjoyed ourselves and look forward to replicating the menu when we next have friends over. ● – Liz Sandford

● Just wanted to say thanks very much for another wonderful, educational and tasty evening. My husband and I are very grateful to be able to attend these events. ● – Annette Duke

Present your Food Club membership card at these outlets to receive a **fabulous discount!**



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MELIA DUBAI

This Bur Dubai hotel is known for its popular restaurants Titanic by Marco Pierre White, and Signature by Sanjeev Kapoor.

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The glamorous hotel in the heart of the city has three fine-dining outlets: Center Cut, Can Can Brasseur and Blue Rain.

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MEDIA ONE HOTEL

This modern hotel in Dubai Media City offers contemporary dining outlets including Café M, Z:One and The Deck on 8.

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www.mediaonehotel.com



MOVENPICK BUR DUBAI

Located in central Dubai, the hotel's outlets include authentic North Indian restaurant Chutneys, and Fountain.

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www.moevenpick-hotels.com



AL RAHA BEACH HOTEL

Set on the corniche, the hotel's outlets are Sevilla, Azur, Café Mozart, Black Pearl Bazar, Enigma, Wanasah and Al Manzil.

Discount: 25% off F&B at all outlets
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LE ROYAL MERIDIEN ABU DHABI

This luxurious five-star hotel has gourmet restaurants including Amalfii, Al Fanar, and L'Opera.

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The resort's restaurants include Arabesque, Luce, Tanjore, The Wok, and Shooters.

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DANAT JEBEL DHANNA RESORT

The beach resort's outlets include Tides, Zaitoun, C View café and Latitude bar.

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This Abu Dhabi hotel's restaurants include LaPiazza, Harvesters Pub, Chequers, Tipar Bar and Cappuccino Royal Café.

Discount: 25% off F&B at all outlets
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TILAL LIWA HOTEL

Located amidst secluded dunes off the Rub Al Khali desert, the hotel's restaurants are Al Badiya, Layali Bar, and Al Liwan.

Discount: 25% off F&B outlets
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*Terms & conditions apply.

Competitions

Fabulous prizes, from dining vouchers to event passes, up for grabs.



WIN! **OVERNIGHT STAY FOR TWO, AT HYATT CAPITAL GATE, WORTH OVER DHS2,500.**
One lucky winner and a partner can get a chance to stay at the King's Room at the luxurious hotel, situated on the top floors of the iconic Capital Gate building, which leans at 18 degrees. Check in and relax, make use of the hotel's facilities, book yourself for a treatment at Abu Dhabi's first sky spa, the Ravana spa, and try out the different cuisines at the hotel's extensive list of fine-dining restaurants. The package includes an overnight stay with a buffet breakfast at 18 degrees restaurant.

WIN! **MEAL FOR TWO AT DUNES CAFÉ, SHANGRI-LA DUBAI, WORTH OVER DHS600.**

One lucky winner can take their partner for the Seafood night dinner on Thursday nights, to enjoy a fresh selection of fish, shellfish, oysters, scallops, and an assortment of other seafood, prepared to your liking.



WIN! **BRUNCH FOR TWO, WORTH OVER DHS550, AT MAZINA, THE ADDRESS DUBAI MARINA**

Two guests can enjoy a salsa session to build up an appetite for the mouth-watering selection of international cuisines, from Mongolian to Indian, at the brunch buffet this month.



WIN! **DINNER FOR TWO AT CHANNELS, MEDIA ROTANA, WORTH OVER DHS300**

One winner and a friend are in for a treat as they get to savour French Polynesian specialties at the Pacific islands theme night at this international restaurant, which takes place every Saturday. Try the aromatic and tantalising paella, as well as the baked mahi-mahi served with pineapple salsa, and don't forget to quench your thirst with the refreshing tropical cocktails.

WIN! **AFTERNOON TEA FOR TWO AT PLANTATION LOUNGE, SOFITEL DUBAI JUMEIRAH BEACH, WORTH OVER DHS250**

Take a friend along to enjoy this traditional British ritual, with an elegant French twist. The À La Française afternoon tea will have you and your dining partner spoiled for choice with treats such as scones, macarons, canapés and a selection of teas. Sit back, chat and indulge, while you take in the décor of this French colonial-themed restaurant.



To stand a chance to win these prizes, visit our competitions page on www.bbcgoodfoodme.com, or simply scan this QR code with your mobile to go directly to the website, and answer the simple questions.

*Terms & conditions apply: Employees of Corporate Publishing International and entrants below 21 years old are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.



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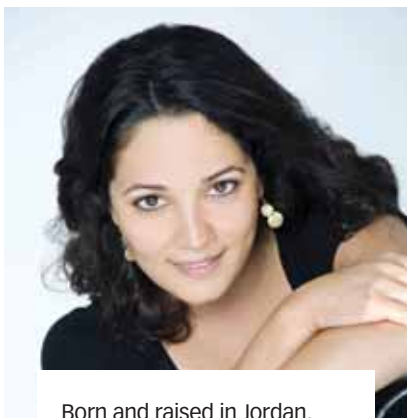
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Born and raised in Jordan, **LARA DARWAZA** left to the UK to study music, before settling down in London to head the music department at The international community school in London. The 38-year old moved to Dubai in 2004 to teach music and classical piano at various schools and cultural centres, and now lives in Dubai Marina with her husband and two-year old daughter. Along with a good read, Lara enjoys going to the movies and a hearty chat with her girlfriends. She is now in the process of launching a Music and Dance centre, to cater to her passion for music, theatre and flamenco dancing.

Catch me dining at...

- Bateel for the Levantine **breakfast** that includes grilled halloumi, fowl (fava bean with lemon and oil) and labneh.
- Certo in Media City for the pear, pecorino and rocket salad – it's the best I've ever tasted – for **lunch**.
- Pai Thai for a delicious **dinner** of my favourites such as the papaya salad and the fish in curry sauce or Thai green chicken curry.

Food luxury:

I can't live without Maldon salt and Madagascar vanilla extract.

Meet the blogger

Helping you connect to the UAE'S foodie community, one blog post at a time.

* About the blog

'A life on a plate' documents and reveals family recipes that have been passed down for generations, from my grandmother to me. I launched the blog in January 2012, and it has since been a great way of communicating my passion for food and cooking! I love reading people's personal stories and the history behind recipes on other blogs, which has inspired me and my blog in many ways. All good recipes have a story behind it, and the blog is a great way for people to see these stories and try new recipes as well.

My culinary icons

Television presenter Mohamad Orfali, as he has a sophisticated approach to cooking and gives Arabic cuisine a refreshing, modern twist. I also like Ina Garten as her dishes really stand out – she's just a pleasure to watch – and Ellie Krieger, who lures viewers with her appealing healthy dishes.

Favourite food memory

When I was a kid, I used to eat a heavy, indulgent breakfast with my grandmother. One of my favourite breakfast items was the butter and homemade apricot jam that she used to smear on a thin piece of Arabic white bread – I loved it!

A foodie personality I would love to dine with...

is Nigella Lawson. She seems like the kind of person you could have a nice conversation with. I would cook my grandmother's Circassian chicken – a chicken dish in creamy walnut sauce.

Top cooking tips

- * Add dark chocolate to chilli con carne to give the dish great depth, without the taste of chocolate.
- * A teaspoon of dark brown sugar balances the acidity in a tomato-based casserole dish.
- * To keep chicken from drying out, I always wrap boiled or roasted chicken in foil. This keeps the juices intact.

Foodie inspiration

I get all my inspiration from international blogs, cookbooks, television and the delicious recipes my grandmother cooked for me, when I was growing up.

“A cup of refreshing black tea with a slice of banana cake, is my ideal midday pick-me-up.”



TAJ

PALACE
DUBAI



LITTLE CHEFS FRIDAY BRUNCH

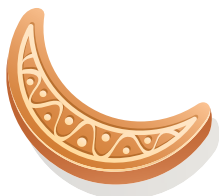
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